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THE AMERICAN SPECTATOR®

VOL. 16

MAY 1983

NO. 5

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C O R R E S P O N D E N C E

For Starters

The March 1983 issue was absolutely great. If you've ever published anything better than Tom Bethell's "Badlands Bolshevism," I can't remember it.

—John M. Ekeberg
Santa Rosa, California

Richard Grenier's "The Greatest Peace Movement of Them All" (TAS, March 1983) seems to me one of the most well-researched, stongly reasoned, skillfully written, powerfully disturbing, and plain damn important essays you have ever published. My most fervent congratulations both to you and to him. I hope and believe this superlative and compelling piece will have an enduring impact on the sorry history of our time. . . .

—Calder Willingham
New Hampton, New Hampshire

Cheap Shot

"I couldn't force myself to read the text." Those eight words cast a grey pall over both Lewis H. Lapham and *The American Spectator* (TAS, March 1983). My philosophy and/or politics aside, a reviewer who has not read the work to be reviewed is dishonest in the extreme: dishonest to his editor, his readers, the author and himself. An editor who knowingly allows publication of a "review" written by someone who has not read the book is worse. It is his job, especially in a publication attempting some semblance of intelligence and scholarship, to ensure honesty and accuracy. Otherwise the credibility of the entire publication is lost. And from an editor who sprinkles his own writings with phrases lifted from HLM one expects the Sage's honesty, if not his erudition and understanding.

No more cheap shots like this one, OK?

—L. Skutch
Westport, Connecticut

Lewis H. Lapham's piece on the Carter memoirs was interesting for the first couple of paragraphs but it does seem a shame to waste the author's obvious talent on such an unworthy subject.

Couldn't he have just said, "I read the book and I told you what to expect four years ago." That would have

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saved several hours of his time and three or four pages of your splendid publication.

I suggest that the subject deserved no more than a couple of sentences among the gems on page 47.

—E.L. Newton
Carson City, Nevada

New Enemies of Taki

The visceral sneer which appeared on page 16 of your March issue (Taki's "Politique Internationale: What Price Oil?"), committed under the influence of a brain fever or perhaps one ouzo too many, should have been deposited in either the circular file or the nearest convenience.

The author's point is as simple as he is; the Israelis are always right, as Ribbentrop thought Hitler to be, and anyone who dares to criticize them must be anti-Semitic. Never mind that other countries' interests may not always be identical to those of Israel. Those countries are in thrall to Arab oil and money (though curiously not to Jewish gold; "In London . . . the Jewish community is at full strength" " . . . the power of France's Jewish community . . ." conditions in America are self-evident). Further, the British government is infested with homosexuals and/or fellow travelers, and the Arabs are to be discounted because their leaders traffic with "blonde hookers." What are we to make of a writer who decries queers and prostitutes? Loyal husband? Don Juan? Prude? Maybe those stories about Greece, where men are men and sheep are nervous, have some basis in fact. In any event, were my surname Theodoracopulos, I'd hesitate to accuse even English public school alumni of buggery. . . .

—Robert Thomas
Bloomfield, New Jersey

It is sad that I, a U.S. conservative, should read the new year's prime piece of race-baiting in the March issue of your magazine.

There, your European correspondent, Taki, rationalizes Israel's "clean-up in Lebanon" with such proud clichés as, "the Arabs are like the Germans used to be: either at your feet or at your throat."

And, as history is re-written in a paragraph, Taki places the onus of the 1948 displacement of two million Palestinians from their homeland not on the Israelis who occupied it (nor nations of the West who made it

possible) but on surrounding Arab states who, he says, were provided terrorists from the "dreadful camps" to which the refugees fled, and who "stint" on compassion for these people, but "not on guns or blonde hookers."

Why, for expressing outrage at Israel's clean-up in Lebanon Margaret Thatcher's British government is denounced as anti-Semitic. Surely this is not what his contact, the Israeli publicist David Garth, had in mind. Mr. Garth is a pro, and Taki does not tell us that Mr. Garth, out of New York, has been a political consultant to Menachem Begin, and was recently retained by the Anti-Defamation League to soften the blow of Israel's clean-up in Lebanon on the U.S. public—mostly by blaming the media for its coverage of the clean-up.

But Garth is cited as explaining away the 1946 Begin-directed bombing of Jerusalem's King David Hotel on the wholly unproven assurance that Begin's people called before they came. What did Garth tell Taki about the Begin lynchings of British sergeants and the senseless massacre of the Arab village of Deir Yassin?

Like all such polemicists Taki invokes "the truth" about Palestine. But if any is there it is burned to a crisp in the fire of the author's hatred for the Arabs.

—Jack Angell
Park Ridge, Illinois

Dismay in Santa Clara

As a member of a small band of campus conservatives about to produce a newsletter, it is with some measure of dismay that I have followed the exchange over the last few issues between Tod Lindberg and the *Dartmouth Review* et al. I would venture that both sides failed to address some very crucial issues.

The current generation of college students has grown up in an era that has totally suppressed the conservative case. There is no discussion of Liberty; and the schools extol the virtues of democracy without mention of the principles of the Republic that made this nation great. In short, we are working in a vacuum of ignorance.

Yet our greatest enemies are the webs of distortion woven around young conservatives. Campus liberals invest a great deal of energy in the myth that people are conservative

(continued on page 37)

THE AMERICAN SPECTATOR.

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C O N T E N T S

Modern Man and The Obsession.....	Robert Nisbet	8
<i>After Christianity and modern socialism, environmentalism is the third great wave of redemptive struggle in Western history.</i>		
The Day They Yoked Hitler.....	John Lukacs	11
<i>"Herr Hitler is reported to be in a more docile frame of mind," a Berlin correspondent wrote on January 30, 1933.</i>		
Return to Respectability.....	Luigi Barzini	14
<i>Protean Germany's search for a better model.</i>		
Politique Internationale: Fleet Street Foppery	Taki	17

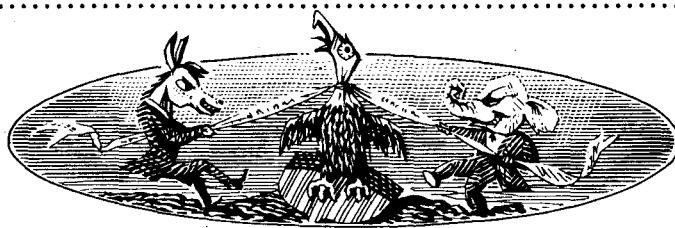
DEPARTMENTS

Correspondence.....		2
Capitol Ideas / Under Roman Ruins.....	Tom Bethell	4
Editorial / Muggeridge at 80, Mitterrand at <i>Figaro</i>		
.....	R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr.	5
The Continuing Crisis.....		7
Eminentoes / Woodstock Democrats.....	P.H. Terzian	18
The Nation's Pulse / Bedpan Hospitality (II).....		
.....	Ernest van den Haag	22
Presswatch / Mediazation.....	Fred Barnes	24
Spectator's Journal / The Loved One	Francis X. Maier	36
Current Wisdom	Assorted Jackasses	39

BOOK REVIEWS

<i>Roots of Radicalism: Jews, Christians, and the New Left</i> , by Stanley Rothman and S. Robert Lichter.....		
.....	Erich Isaac and Rael Jean Isaac	26
<i>Robert Lowell: A Biography</i> , by Ian Hamilton	Robert Leiter	28
<i>Straight Talk About American Education</i> , by Theodore M. Black, and <i>Compelling Belief: The Culture of American Schooling</i> , by Stephen Arons	Chester E. Finn, Jr.	30
<i>What Was Literature?</i> , by Leslie Fiedler	William H. Nolte	32
<i>A History of Post-War Soviet Writing</i> , by Grigori Svirski		
.....	Marin Strmecki	34

COVER Drawing by John Springs



UNDER ROMAN RUINS

by Tom Bethell

As we drove into Rome, past litter-strewn outskirts which would have made any American liberal feel proud of his Environmental Protection Agency, the guide in the front of the bus remarked that Roman shops were closed on Monday mornings. Then there was the lunch hour to consider (or was it two hours?) and of course there was the afternoon siesta. As best I could make out the time to go shopping was about five o'clock in the evening.

There were about twelve of us in the bus—"intellectuals," as Bob Tyrrell teasingly called us—and I think we all began working out simultaneously the public-policy implications of this news about Roman business hours. There were a few trained supply-siders in our group,

and it is well known that supply-siders do not miss opportunities to analyze the way the world either works or opts for leisure.

"It sounds like they need a tax cut," said Les Lenkowsky from the back of the bus. He works for the Smith-Richardson Foundation. I was about to correct him gently by saying, "You mean, tax *rate* reduction, especially the top marginal rates on income, with particular reference to rates on investment or 'unearned' income," which is my standard interruption on these occasions. But William Kristol, political science professor at the University of Pennsylvania, got in ahead of me by saying, "True, but it would spoil the charm."

We have just flown in from New York and have not yet put up at our first hotel, yet here we were already engaged in dialogue and a meaningful exchange of views. Could young Kristol be right, I worried? (We were all "young" on this trip, but some were younger than others.) By this time we were passing close to the Roman Forum, a "marketplace of ideas" in former times, and one or two other well-known sites of Imperial Rome. Bits of pieces of marble were lying here and there amidst the cat-littered grassy slopes, and old ruins were set elegantly amidst pine trees. We passed a small circular temple with a conical roof, said to be 2,300 years old.

Were there opportunities here for entrepreneurs—opportunities which could only be realized if there were a significant shift in the relative price (or "opportunity costs") of leisure and effort? Or was Kristol right to suggest that under certain circumstances and in certain societies fully depreciated ruins acquire a higher implicit value ("charm") than is likely to be attained by any alternative resource use?

A meaningful question, I think we'll all agree, but one to which there could be no simplistic answer. Perhaps it could be put on the table for

tomorrow's exchange of views at the USIS library.

Shunning sleep, I decided to inspect the Roman public transportation system in the afternoon. First I attempted to enter the Metro system at a station called *Repubblica*, but this proved to be difficult. Two uniformed guards standing by the entrance gate told me that I would have to go back outside to a certain *tabaccàio* where I could buy the necessary ticket. The *tabaccàionist* told me that he had sold out, but he directed me to another vendor even farther away from the subway entrance. Eventually I bought the ticket, returned to the subway, was admitted by the uniformed guards, and boarded a train.

Such a complex system must surely have strong "disincentives" built into it, I reflected, and the Roman citizenry evidently concurred. Only about nine or ten of them were on the train—this in the middle of the afternoon. Thus I felt I had established the significant point that Romans were incentivists and would so report to Prof. Laffer on my return to America. (With the following cautionary footnote: it could have been, of course, that ridership was sparse because the people were all still taking siestas as a result of other disincentives already mentioned. But this would not alter my generalization about the Roman disposition.)

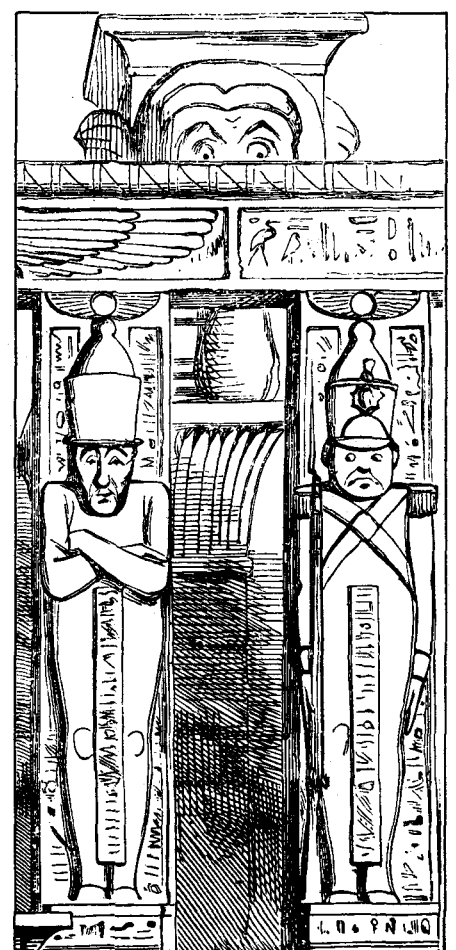
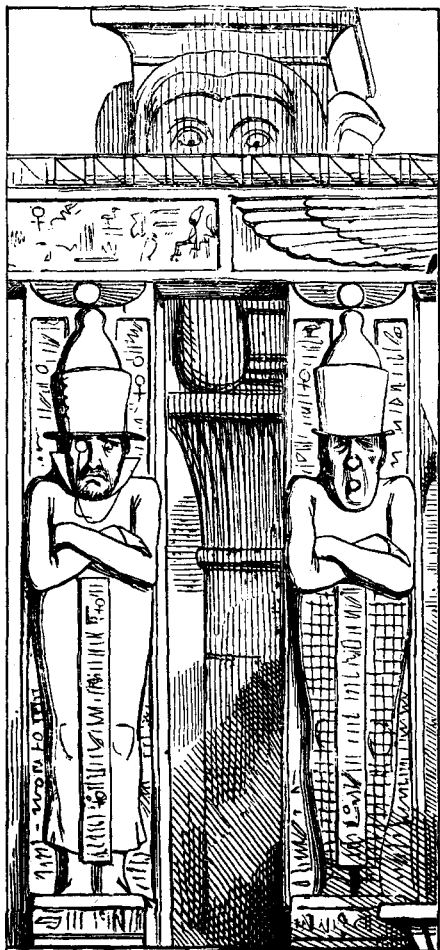
As we rattled along underground it did occur to me that although the Roman metro system may not have been flawlessly designed from the point of view of incentives, it was surprising to find they had a metro at all. Imagine how difficult it must have been to excavate the tunnels without boring into long-buried Caesarean sections and so on.

I emerged at the station called *Colosseo*, which is near to the center of Rome. This would have been the equivalent of rush hour in America, but the station was almost deserted. I think I noticed only three or four people on the platform. I paused

briefly to admire the ancient stadium, 1,900 years old and today entirely nonfunctional (but as with the metro, of course, surprising to find it there at all). However, I did not let it distract me too much from my supply-side train of thought.

The siesta had ended after all. Dozens of small cars were rushing about madly in all directions, and the buses were packed to the bursting point. Roman buses, it turns out, operate on an "honor" system, as follows. Once again, you find a *tabaccàio* or some such authorized vendor, you buy your ticket, and you board your bus, which is operated by a driver who pays no attention to the passengers or whether they have tickets. You are supposed to push your ticket into a machine, which goes "clonk" and stamps it with the date. Once in a while a ticket inspector may come aboard and check up on everyone. You risk a

Tom Bethell is The American Spectator's Washington correspondent.



fine, but it is a good bet that there will be no inspector, so in fact most bus passengers are "free riders." Hence, crowded buses.

Well, let us at least not get into the "free rider" problem that is so beloved of professional economists. But did it make sense for the Roman authorities to build, no doubt at enormous expense, a fare-paid underground railway system while keeping in place a "free rider" system above ground?

We might perhaps have enjoyed a meaningful exchange of views on that subject too at our meeting the next day, but alas it was not to be. Dr. Antonio Martino regaled us with so many interesting facts and interpretations about Italy and Italian perceptions that the free-rider problem somehow never arose. One of the points that did emerge, need I add, was that the top income-tax rate in Italy is about 60 percent, taking effect at a not-very-high income level. Given such an incentive-oriented

population, it came as no surprise to learn that the underground economy is large.

Martino is one of the Italian experts on this extensive subject, and he had elsewhere pointed out that the Italian "underground" factories do not just turn out small things like pins (as one might imagine) but large things like buses. There is so much demand for them, as I have already explained! (How such conspicuous enterprises as bus factories can possibly elude the revenue agents and the constabulary I don't know, but of course it is encouraging to know that they do, otherwise I dare say siestas would be even longer than they are.)

One thing you are bound to notice on a journey to Rome's outskirts, or indeed on the journey in from the airport, is the very large number of half-built structures standing forlornly by the side of the road—

houses, apartment buildings, and even office buildings. They have obviously been abandoned in mid-construction. Not a construction worker is to be seen, uncut grass completely surrounds the building frames, and vegetation curls up over the edges of recently laid concrete.

These incomplete structures, the infallible signs of a disorganized economy, seemed to be the contemporary echo of the numerous "incomplete" buildings in the center of Rome—I mean the surviving ruins from the Imperial past. No doubt, the economic forces needed to preserve old buildings in one place make it difficult to put up new buildings elsewhere.

Kristol-the-Younger was no doubt right to suggest that it is not practical to pour the new wine of entrepreneurial energy into such hallowed old bottles as Rome, but the trouble is that the legislation that in practice prevents such an outcome casts a siesta-like pall over the entire country,

most of it nonhallowed. The solution, then, may very well be something like the opposite of enterprise zones—let us call them economic "black holes" (corresponding to Rome, Florence, Venice, etc.) where the tax rates stay high and the regulations complex, while elsewhere the government vastly simplifies things for the citizenry. Of course, you only have to propose such an idea to realize what could go wrong: incentive-minded Romans would no doubt prefer to live in low-tax Entrepreneurland than amidst the high-tax charm. Soon the authorities would have to build a new Roman wall around the city to keep people in. All of which goes to show how difficult it is to work things out satisfactorily in this life.

Anyway, I've gone on far too long with this nonsense. What I really meant to say was that Rome is a nice place to visit, and for all I know is a nice place to live, too. And don't miss St. Peter's. □

EDITORIAL



MUGGERIDGE AT 80, MITTERRAND AT FIGARO

by R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr.

LONDON—Here in Europe, having just concluded a long series of meetings with distinguished politicians and writers, this Yank journalist has been made to sit up and twitch. Free expression is fundamental to our intellectual and political life; journalists have come to accept our First Amendment rights as sacrosanct and immutable. Yet are those rights all that secure? I am in doubt. The plague of litigious dogooders loose in the Republic is a constant peril to free expression, and the prospects become genuinely alarming when one considers all those hungry lawyers coming out of our superabundant law schools plus all those hungry graduates of our superabundant journalism schools who in their eagerness for a headline

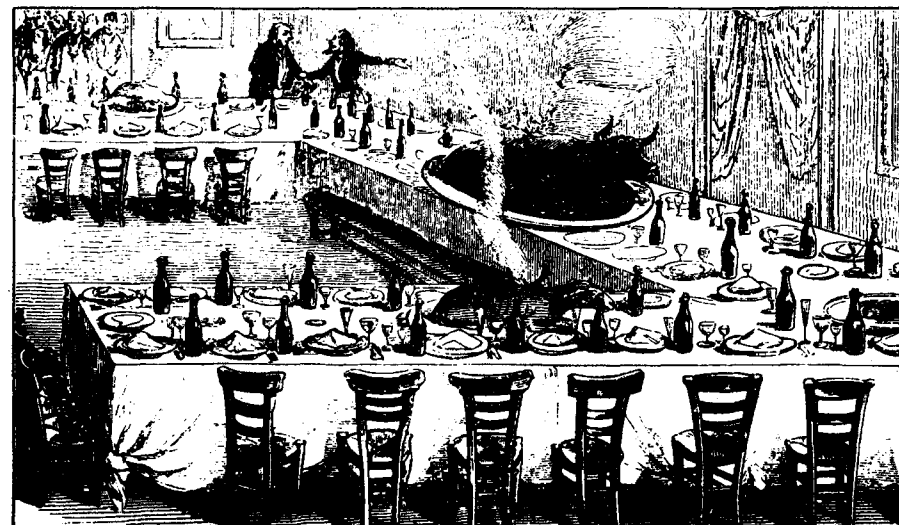
give the enemies of the First Amendment delectable opportunities for mischief.

The contrasting conditions of Britain's Malcolm Muggeridge and of France's André Audinot, president of Figaro Co., publisher of the Paris daily *Figaro*, have reminded me of the

usefulness and fragility of free expression even in the West. Last month while Audinot was battling with the Socialist government to keep his paper and his freedom Muggeridge was being celebrated throughout the London media on the occasion of his 80th birthday. There

were television appearances, newspaper and magazine articles, an eloquent telegram from Ronald Reagan, and on March 25 an exuberant band of journalists from the Left and the Right fêted him at the high-toned Garrick Club. Meanwhile in Paris, Audinot was consulting lawyers and accountants.

Many Americans have delighted in Muggeridge's ebullient iconoclasm in his many books and, until some years ago, his regular *Esquire* magazine columns. He is one of the monuments to free expression that Western journalists can look to for inspiration. Boisterously using his freedom to the fullest over some five decades, he has moved from a flirtation with Marxism to a singularly vigilant and intelligent anti-Communism. He has hilariously railed at dogooders and fatuous members of the bourgeoisie alike. And, after a lifetime of skepticism,



Adapted from RET's weekly Washington Post column syndicated by King Features.

last November he turned himself over to Roman Catholicism. What next? "Death and eternity," the old rascal told his audience at the Garrick Club, and in celebrating the Reaper's allures he has again selected the perfect dead cat to heave onto the laps of the complacent.

Muggeridge's has been a gorgeous

drama, all eighty years of it lived with verve and eloquence that I can report to you remain undiminished. Yet even as Muggeridge's drama is an illustration of the value of free expression, Audinot's drama is an illustration of freedom's fragility. We all expect the enemies of freedom to wear uniforms and carry truncheons. But a far more frequent menace to free expression in the West is the

smug do-gooder who bears uplifting slogans and the promise of reform and good government.

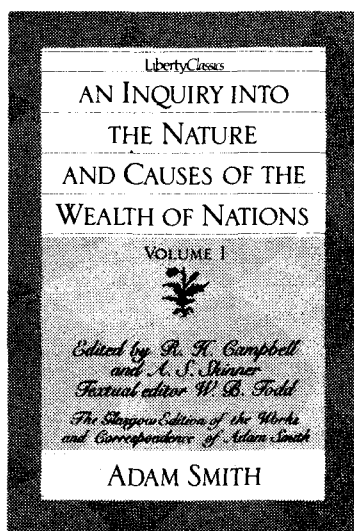
Audinot is not nearly so eloquent or high spirited as Muggeridge, but he is eager to tell those he invites to dine at his table of how he believes the government is harassing him for his newspaper's assaults on its policies. His paper is one of the two major Paris dailies controlled by

Robert Hersant, a communications tycoon whose urban and rural newspapers are read by one of every five Frenchmen. Now the government has disinterred an obscure law never before used or elaborated upon so that, Audinot believes, its friends will be able to gain control of the other anti-government Hersant paper in Paris, *France-Soir*. The law is about as vital for contemporary French life as those archaic laws against spitting and swearing still on the books in some American cities. It was meant to end control of the French press by Nazi collaborators after World War II. Other French newspaper owners have ignored it and never been prosecuted, but Audinot has been indicted and, he says, warned to come to terms with the Socialists.

He has already had to spend hundreds of thousands of dollars in his defense. *Le Figaro* now faces loss of ad revenue from government sources. A Socialist plan to change tax laws will weaken the paper still more. Even his indictment was irregular, for Audinot is a member of France's legislative body, and to indict a French Deputy voting procedures must be followed in the National Assembly that in Audinot's case were ignored. Moreover *Le Figaro's* books are now under the scrutiny of government tax inspectors. Audinot is being powerfully squeezed. France's government controls much of the advertisement revenue available to news media and it controls the banks. Now the courts are onto him all, Audinot protests, because of politics. My inquiries in Paris supported his charges.

How can this be? France's Socialist president speaks of social justice and a new dawn for the French workers. Well, I for one am made jumpy by politicians who shout for social justice. In our own country fear of libeling do-gooders and corporate mullahs is obviously muzzling free expression. Ralph Nader pursued the independent journalist Ralph de Toledano with a million-dollar libel suit for seven years owing to one errant sentence in a de Toledano column. Who will criticize Nader after that? The Nader case is not unique. Nat Hentoff, author of *The First Freedom*, warns of the increasing threat to free expression owing to journalists' fear of libel. "The founders did not want to establish a nation of meek people practicing self-censorship." He supports the position of the ACLU, i.e., that all expressions about public issues be immune from libel laws. It might assure us more Muggeridges and fewer Audinots. □

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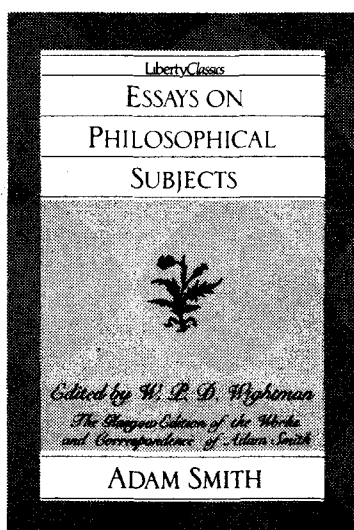
By Adam Smith

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THE CONTINUING CRISIS



•March passes, and the high jinks in Chicago continue as the entrenched statist throw their energies and resources against the Hon. Harold Washington, a dusky libertarian of indubitable convictions and at least one jail sentence. First there was the threat of a write-in candidacy from La Byrne, then, toward the month's end, there were demonstrations by the paleface. Yet the Hon. Washington scuds on, and all true blue libertarians pray mightily for his electoral triumph. He is our dream candidate. Quite beyond his perfumed oratory about governmental compassion and breast-feeding the citizenry there are these historic facts: here is a candidate who refused to pay taxes for four principled years, who defied still other coercive laws, and who, conscience-bound, actually did time in the calaboose for his beliefs.

•The economy continues to gather strength, as was seen by the Commerce Department's report of an unusually hearty 3.6 percent rise in its index of leading economic indicators for January. Such data are setting off tingles of fear in the upper gastrointestinal tracts of many Democrats, inducing them to rush to the House of Representatives and—high on oaths and God knows what else—put the kabosh to the Reagan Recovery. They pass jobs bills, still more Social Security increases, and a budget belching with the old moonshine, high taxes, more government expenditures on futile programs and arrant boondoggles. A hint of what stimulates our delusory big-spenders came on March 16 when the House Committee on Standards of Official Conduct notified one of the House's most assiduous dreamers, the Hon. Ron Dellums, that he and his staff were under investigation owing to charges of trafficking in marijuana and cocaine. In Rio de Janeiro the mad kisser struck again. This time Mr. Jose Moura, who has built a solid reputation among Brazilians by violently kissing such notables as Mr. Frank Sinatra and Pope John Paul II, ambushed Rio's new Socialist governor, Mr. Leonel Brizola, during his inauguration and kissed his nose.

•On March 5, Australians turned

to the left by voting in the Labor Party of Robert Hawke. The French electorate leaned to the right; and on March 6 the West Germans reaffirmed their rightward drift, the grim consequences of which were not long in coming. On March 15, fifteen nautical miles south of Dueodde, Denmark, a West German "fishing boat" netted a Warsaw Pact submarine of the ill-starred Whiskey class and forced it to surface. No Russian protest was registered, but the assault did give peace advocates a dreadful fright, particularly members of the outdoorsy Green Party, which had some rather bad press in March. After winning its first seats ever in the Bundestag, the eldest member of the party, Herr Werner Vogel, was exposed as a former Nazi, and not just a Nazi of the run-of-the-mill but an actual stormtrooper and an ex-official of the Nazi Interior Ministry. What is more, reports circulated in the German press charging that members of the party met with Libyan leader Muommar Qaddafi last march in Vienna, and they did not talk about baby seals or butterflies or smile buttons.

•The American Catholic bishops' rumble-bumble against nuclear weaponry was revealed for the theological spoonery that it is when one of Islam's most esteemed religious leaders, Sheik Muhammed Assad, Esq., cited the eighth sura of the Koran as scriptural justification for building nuclear weapons and blasting Islam's enemies back into the stone age—an age that would not be all that uncongenial if you happen to live in one of the Sheik's Islamic paradises or in that perfect earthly realm that our politicized bishops would have us inhabit. At the Hague, a 20-year-old conservative of the sort that Professor Arthur Schlesinger always tries to warn us about was arrested while prowling in Queen Beatrix's residential palace; searching, he claims, for Prince William the Silent, a Dutch nobleman who has not been seen in public since he was shot by Mr. Balthazar Gerard in 1584. The Greater London Council announced plans to spend \$750,000 to turn an unused butchery warehouse into a

center for male and female homosexuals, thus causing hurt feelings amongst transsexuals who could not help but notice the irony of excluding them from a lunatic center that had once been the place of employment for butchers. Anthropologist Edward Bruner, who braved shrieks and snickers to lead a research team into the men's rooms and women's rooms of the Champaign-Urbana campus of the University of Illinois to do a comparative study of men's and women's graffiti, has found that women's graffiti is "more caring and helping, men are more competitive and aggressive, much less conversational than women." According to Professor Bruner, women who write on bathroom walls are "more interactive and interpersonal. They raise serious questions, ask advice, and sometimes share experiences"; he seems to have preferred the women's rooms. In Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, Rep. Steve Sill withdrew animal-rights legislation after animal-rights lobbyist Mrs. Marie Bridgeman suffered shocking harassment and the stately Oklahoma Capitol filled with unseemly imitations of catcalls and dog barks. Mrs. Bridgeman had asked members of the legislature and the Capitol press corps to telephone her answering machine for an inspirational harangue on animal rights. Alas, the *Daily Oklahoman* reports: "For three weeks her machine was filled with messages of muffled laughter and choruses of human voices imitating yowling cats."

•President Reagan aroused indignation from Communists and non-Communists alike when he proffered his view that the Soviet Union is "the focus of evil in the modern world" and urged the clergy to avoid treating the arms race "as a giant misunderstanding and thereby remove yourself from the struggle between right and wrong, good and evil." Let us face facts: Lincoln could get away with oleaginous rhetoric like that but Reagan's target was only the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the best example of progressive politics in the world today with the possible exception of Cuba and Vietnam where the infant mortality rate is even lower.

•In Moscow, tall and elegant Mr. Donald Maclean died, and in London three weeks later tall and elegant Anthony Blunt did too. Both had been members of the tallest and most elegant spy network in the history of Great Britain. It is unlikely that the spies' average height was any greater than, say, the average height of the Boston Celtics basketball team, but if the obituaries published in the American press are to be believed they certainly were elegant, and idealistic, and homosexual, and decadent—the stuff of dreams. Two others who exited this orb in March were Mr. Arthur Koestler, an inelegant ex-Communist, and Dame Rebecca West, presented by our press as the most furious feminist since Eve.

•In culture notes, a former member of the Hell's Angels testified before the Senate Judiciary Committee that his quondam colleagues have an "open contract" on Mr. Mick Jagger and the Rolling Stones, despite the Stones' adamant refusal to use soap or to dress up during weekends at their country houses. In San Antonio, Texas the citizenry is still guffawing at City Councilman Bernardo Eureste, the left-wing activist who leaped from his car when muggers accosted him and left a 23-year-old female secretary to be beaten. "How do you say Teddy Kennedy in Spanish? Bernardo Eureste," is the joke now in circulation, and it helped him not at all to claim his attackers were local gendarmes.

•Stanford University announced that it would probably reject a \$500 donation to establish a scholarship for avowed pederasts. Yankee know-how was again validated when Dr. Barney Clark died. All vital organs were in collapse, yet his artificial heart continued to beat. There was furor in Jacksonville, Alabama when a local television crew showed up at the scene where an emotionally disturbed man threatened to set himself afire and then proceeded to film the holocaust when he did. Finally, March witnessed the centenary of the death of Dr. Karl Marx, who probably now has more adepts in the Audubon Society than in the Soviet Politburo. RIH!

—RET



Robert Nisbet

MODERN MAN AND THE OBSESSION

After Christianity and modern socialism, environmentalism is the third great wave of redemptive struggle in Western history.

It is easy to think of environmentalist sects and movements in the Western world as concerned solely with the physical environment and its protection and rehabilitation. Highly skilled and well-paid public-relations experts together with a universally compliant press have accustomed us to this view of environmentalism. But it is nevertheless an incomplete and often distorted view. In its more militant and aggressive manifestations environmentalism has become a social movement devoted increasingly to political, social, and economic ends. More and more, in both structure and aim, environmentalism resembles other fundamentally revolutionary movements in Western religious and political history.

Two extraordinarily good recent studies of environmentalism in present day America offer considerable substantiation of this observation.* Mary Douglas and Aaron Wildavsky see environmentalism, or much of it, as falling within the history of sectarianism, concerned, as sects invariably are, with evils and risks and their obliteration. Ages and peoples vary widely in their identification of the really significant risks and uncertainties faced by human beings. A primitive people, for example, may believe that the greatest dangers faced by man are the invisible but puissant evil spirits abroad everywhere. For such a people, as Douglas and Wildavsky write, there is no such thing as natural death: each ending of life, no matter what the age of the deceased may be, is the result of direct intervention by some hostile spirit or force. The French anthropologist, Levy-

Bruhl, thought that the primitive mind was substantively different from modern, civilized consciousness, largely by virtue of the primitives' disdain for natural causes and their total attraction to incessant interventions by spirits as true causes of death. This leads Douglas and Wildavsky to wonder what Levy-Bruhl would make of today's increasingly obsessed sectarians of nature who also repudiate any notion of natural death, seeing the alien presence of not hostile spirits but death-dealing carcinogens, contaminants, and pollutants everywhere, our form of economy and polity actively engaged in their proliferation.

"We seem to have changed places—no, we have joined the primitives in refusing to quench our concern. They demand an autopsy for every death: the day that we do that, the essential difference between our mentality and theirs will be abolished." The authors conclude the passage: "Was the primitive, then, really modern?"

The question is a fair one, and it does no good to turn to scientists, for although armed with greater factual information, they too are often seized by this modern

manifestation of what Levy-Bruhl called the primitive mentality. Professor Samuel S. Epstein, for example, author of *The Politics of Cancer* (promoted not strangely by the Sierra Club), believes that cancer is becoming epidemic, the result of an obsolete form of government that refuses to regulate human lives properly. Not so, says Philip Handler, former head of the National Academy of Sciences. He writes that "the United States is not suffering an 'epidemic of cancer,' it is experiencing an 'epidemic of life'—in that an ever greater fraction of the population survives to the advanced ages at which cancer has always been prevalent. The overall, age-corrected incidence of cancer has not been increasing; it has been declining slowly for some years." Such an observation doubtless makes Professor Epstein and many members of environmentalist sects apoplectic. Doesn't the former president of the National Academy know about those "ticking bombs" out there—nuclear reactors, that is—spewing out their cancer-causing and death-dealing radiation waves day and night?

The special interest of *Risk and Culture* for social scientists lies in the sophisticated framework of inquiry in which the authors set contemporary environmentalism. They see environmentalist fervor as a kind of risk-intoxication caused as much by subjective as objective forces, by the ineradicability of risk-perception among human beings as by anything directly and objectively attributable to technology and industry. The choice of risks "to worry about depends on the social forms selected," i.e., patterns of social and cultural existence. "The choice of risks and the choice of how to live are taken together. Each form of social life has its own typical risk portfolio." The blue-collar worker typically sees risks that the upper-middle-class individual is indifferent to; and vice versa. "The sudden appearance of intense public concern about the environment can



**Risk and Culture*, by Mary Douglas and Aaron Wildavsky. University of California Press, \$14.95. *Progress and Privilege: America in an Age of Environmentalism*, by William Tucker. Anchor Press/Doubleday, \$17.95.

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never be explained by evidence of harm from technology."

It is the characteristic mentality of the sectarian that is at work in the more militant sectors of environmentalism, declare Douglas and Wildavsky. Their work is as much a study of the sect as recurrent social form as it is of environmentalism as such. Such a study is also perforce one in some degree of enthusiasm, a pathological state of mind more often seen in the histories of religion and mass politics than in nature-study groups. The sect, it is emphasized by the authors, develops its own structural reason for being, and almost any issue can be shaped to the sect's needs for incessant enthusiasm, militance, and generalized suspicion of the rest of the social order. A great many environmentalist sects today fall easily in the social category that historically has included Anabaptists, Quakers, Shakers, Jacobins, Abolitionists, Socialists, Anti-fluoridationists, and many, many others. The conservation movement that began to flourish at the turn of the century under men like Theodore Roosevelt and Gifford Pinchot was a movement in prudence and efficiency, designed to increase and prolong economic growth. What it has become in organizations like the Friends of the Earth is a sectarian struggle to abolish economic growth as far as possible, to preserve the wilderness at whatever cost to economy and democratic society.

When we turn to William Tucker's book we are confronted by the same *genus environmentalis* that Douglas and Wildavsky examine in their study of the perception of risk. Tucker, however, presents the panoramic view: it is environmentalism as such, not as mere case history in the annals of human perceptions of risks, that interests him. He argues persuasively that for the last couple of decades we have been living in nothing less than "the Age of Environmentalism," where environmentalism "comes close to being a national religion. There seems to be no issue, large or small, that can win more support, year in and year out, than the notion of 'protecting the environment.'" True, there are a great many Americans whose primary interest in economic growth, jobs, and profits leaves them largely untouched by environmentalist pleas for a steady state, zero-growth economy in the interests of the wilderness. But they lack for the most part the kind of lobbying in Washington, D.C. that has become the hallmark of the multitude of conservation societies, many of them rich and powerful.

Tucker usefully likens the environmentalists, or at least the more dedicated and militant of them, to an aristocracy, one to which the relatively well-established American middle class enjoys attaching itself. "Sitting at the top of the economic heap, aristocracies naturally do not want to

see too much economic or social rearrangement. Having made it to the top, they become far more concerned with *preventing others from climbing the ladder behind them*, than in making it up a few more rungs themselves." Many environmentalist leaders are no different, Tucker argues. They too have for the vastly larger part made it in life and thus have the time and the means to protect the wilderness from whatever alterations might be re-

Environmentalism is the conservatism...of the liberal classes.

quired for others to know the exhilaration of rising in economic and social status. "At heart, environmentalism favors the affluent over the poor, the haves over the have-nots." Environmentalism is the conservatism—in both senses of that word, political as well as naturalist—of the liberal classes. In a degree rarely seen in history, liberals, conservatives, middle- and upper-classes join ardently in the cause, as they see it, of protecting the earth from its potential ravagers. The more enthusiastic the environmentalist's belief in the sanctity of nature, the less attention he will give to the causes which have traditionally interested liberals, such as minority rights, social welfare, and the like.

Tucker examines in detail the difference between contemporary conservation and the conservation associated with the names of Theodore Roosevelt and Gifford Pinchot that was little more than the gospel of efficiency applied to natural resources instead of, say, labor and machinery. It was entirely in the spirit of Taylorism and its time and motion studies in the factories. Pinchot was explicit: "The object of our forest policy," he declared at a meeting of the American Society of Foresters, "is not to preserve the forests because they are beautiful . . . or because they are refuges for the wild creatures of the wilderness . . . but the making of prosperous homes." And elsewhere Pinchot wrote: "The job



was not to stop the ax, but to regulate its use. . . . A nation utterly absorbed in the present had to be brought to consider the future." No one can reasonably quarrel with environmentalism in this sense; indeed, it is absolutely indispensable to a free private-enterprise system and its continuing growth and diffusion of social and cultural benefits to mankind.

The most formidable enemy of *conservation* today is not the corporation, as the Sierra Club myth has it, but rather the whole *preservationist* mentality that has sprung up so powerfully in our time. Almost any use of the wilderness for other than pantheistic-mystical or austere recreational purposes is declared profane and sacrilegious. "What is being purveyed," writes Tucker, "is a view of the world in which human activity is defined as 'bad' and natural conditions as 'good.' The Sierra Club's definition of a 'degraded environment' is an environment that shows evidence of human habitation. What is being preserved is evidently more than 'ecosystems.' It is an image of wilderness as a semi-sacred place beyond humanity's intrusion." Thus the appalling overgrowth in many of the forests which have been made off-limits by legislators in service to environmentalist lobbies; thus the infinite variety of ways by which the residents of a Marin County—those who got there early—repulse a later generation that would also like to build houses there, even though an ecosystem or two might be damaged. And thus the holding-up of dam-building and utility construction through endless requirements of "environmental impact" statements. All in the name of sacred nature.

In the typical environmentalist tract, nature is serene and benign, a gorgeous painting of snow-capped peaks, of mountain ranges, plateaus, meadows, lakes, and streams, of sylvan recesses and bosky retreats for the mystically inclined, and ever-productive—when man doesn't interfere—of natural, healthful, organic foods untouched by poisonous, death-dealing chemical insecticides. Not often are we reminded that nature is also a composite of terrifying, atmosphere-polluting volcanoes, of devastating earthquakes, of hurricanes, typhoons, and tidal waves, of droughts and floods, of lethal insects, snakes, and wild animals, and of literally trillions upon trillions of microscopic organisms waiting, it may fairly be said, for man's technological guard to drop in order to commence their onslaughts against health and life. This is more nearly the nature our ancestors knew and feared, the nature that the God of the Old Testament ordered man to subdue and have dominion over. Man's greatest accomplishment on earth is the development of cities and thus civilization, and this development has always been and must be at the expense of the environmentalists'

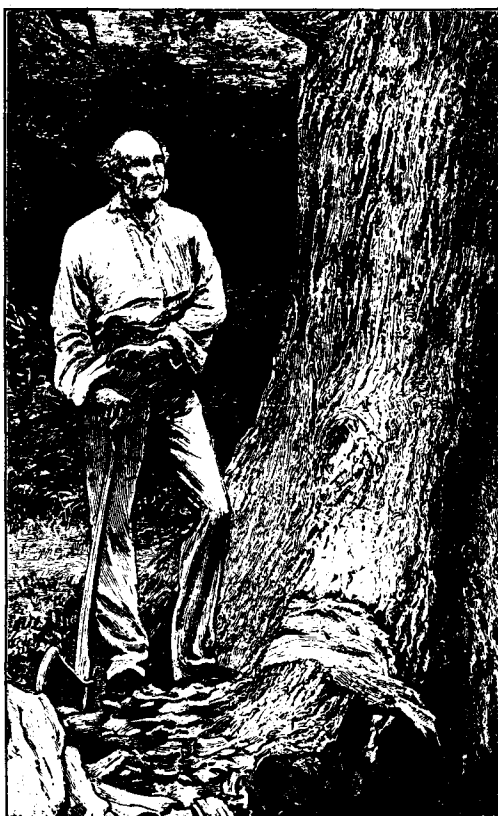
beloved wilderness, a form of love that only an advanced technology and an upper-class mode of living makes attractive.

Naturally, environmentalism has its sacred-mythic past. Just as Christianity and Judaism posit an age of the prelapsarian Adam, just as Marxist theology has its sacred age in the primitive communism from which all history is a falling-away, so environmentalists have their myth of an original, immaculate earth where only man proved vile. As a historian, I am obliged by the record of the Western past to see environmentalism—of the kind espoused by the Commoners, Ehrlichs, and Browsers—as the third great wave of redemptive struggle in Western history, the first being Christianity, the second modern socialism. No one can foretell the future, but it is by no means impossible that environmentalism will prove to be the most radical of the three. After all, Western civilization can be said to rest upon the ancient Jewish injunction to be fruitful and multiply and to have dominion over the earth and all that lives on it; this and the Greek Protagoras's "Man is the measure of all things." Man, not the wilderness. The greatest heresy preached in the Middle Ages was that of St. Francis and his followers. Had Franciscan pantheism prevailed utterly, the cost would have been nothing less than Western civilization. The West's Jewish and Greek roots have made it virtually alone the embodiment of intellectual, scientific, and moral, as well as economic and technological, progress.

Of the radicalism or potential radicalism of militant environmentalism today there should be no doubt whatever. Its base may be nature-regard, an innocent enough thing, most would say, and not to be compared seriously with socialism and Communism. As long as nothing more than nature-regard is involved, our indulgence of environmentalism is reasonable. But during the past twenty or thirty years we have seen the aims and ideals of the great John Muir and the original Sierra Club transposed from nature alone to the whole social system we live under. Since threats to the sacred wilderness, to sky, earth, and water, are declared by environmentalists in rising fanaticism to be inseparable from the economic and political system we call capitalism, then in the interests of purity and goodness, this system must be reconstructed, radically if necessary. The appeal of environmentalism, in its more extreme manifestations at least, becomes irresistible to that permanent cadre of political and social radicals Western society has nurtured ever since the Enlightenment. This cadre has never been primarily interested in the protection of nature, but if such a movement carries with it even the possibility of political and social revolution, it is well that the cadre join it; which, starting with the late 1960s, it did.

The system of free enterprise has been

hated by the utopian-millennialist mind for two or more centuries. Environmentalists as such do not hate the system, or didn't in the beginning; but they have come to hate many things vital to the system, starting with our sources of energy—gas, coal, oil, and, above all, nuclear energy. The last has reached the proportions of diabolism in the minds of a very large number of environmentalists, and efforts are unsparing in the prevention of use of nuclear sources of industrial power. That environmentalism can be deadly in its power is already evident in the near-moribund state that nuclear power has reached. As the result of incessant, around-the-clock challenges to every aspect of nuclear energy—by lawyers, scientists, and professionals of all kinds in service to immaculate nature—this clean, safe, and potentially liberating form of energy is about to enter history's dustbin, casualty of the Levy-Bruhl primitive mentality that feeds upon discovered evils, real or imaginary, making man's life a thing of incessant escape. That nuclear energy does in fact present possible hazards is not to be doubted, but so do coal and oil, so do automobiles, railroads, and jetliners. On the evidence of the best—and overwhelming majority—of physical scientists, nuclear energy is the cleanest and safest yet developed. Its record is matchless among fuels so far as life, health, and comfort are concerned. But for right-thinking, born-again Friends of the Earth, nuclear energy is diabolical, its radioactivity (far less actually than what nature-lovers absorb naturally in their mountain-safaris) cousin to the fallout of nuclear bomb explosions. Predictably, it is the sun that fascinates our environmentalists as a source of energy—and no doubt as a form of spiritual purification, for there is a renascent primitivism in the environmentalist's characteristic approach to life.



William Tucker believes that this Age of Environmentalism will probably pass, just as the Victorian Age did. We can be grateful to the environmentalists, Tucker says, for pointing to pollutants and contaminants we had become careless of; they served for a while a worthy function. But the time has come for them to go home. It will be interesting to see at the next Earth Day just how many have heeded Tucker's advice. Not many, I should guess. For environmentalism has become a phenomenon even more formidable than Tucker and also Douglas and Wildavsky appear to realize. It is nothing less than a major social movement, one that has brought to its own passion the passions of a large number of groups not primarily interested perhaps in the physical environment. The processes of syncretism have operated for environmentalism just as they did for primitive Christianity and for socialism of the past century. Friedrich Engels, in his history of Christianity, took astute note of how like the Marxism of his day was to apostolic Christianity, each attracting to its banner, Engels observed wryly, cranks and crackpots of every description—faith-healers, perpetual motionists, apocalyptic, millennialists, sun-worshippers, earth-worshippers, and so on. It is not different at the present moment with environmentalism. Merely consider the number of gays, lesbians, astrologists, socialists, sexologists, organic food faddists, peaceniks, freeze-niks, and assorted others who religiously observe Earth Day, gathering joyously with the nature-lovers. That the United States could have been sucked as far as it was into the elegantly fatuous Law of the Sea is tribute at bottom to the political clout of environmentalism.

All social movements are built around what Kenneth Minogue calls "suffering situations." Christianity had a suffering mankind to save through Christ, Marxism a suffering proletariat, and the Commoners, Ehrlichs, and Browsers a suffering nature. It is the indelible mark of every major social movement that in time it loses or else transforms its initial cult- and sect-like character, and, through processes and techniques of differentiation, strategic liaisons, routinization of the charismatic, and, above all, consecrated missionary work, becomes ever-more different from its early roots, though it declaims mightily on the sacred continuity of it all. The number of demons to be combated increases exponentially, in proportion not to anything tangible or empirical in the world, but to rising intensity of faith. Does anyone think that for Christians mankind will ever be sufficiently saved to warrant closing down the churches and putting away the sacred books? It is no different with militant environmentalism. Man's mere presence as a species will be sufficient evidence to environmentalists of the future of the absolutely vital nature of their redemptive labors. □

John Lukacs

THE DAY THEY YOKED HITLER

"Herr Hitler is reported to be in a more docile frame of mind,"
a Berlin correspondent wrote on January 30, 1933.

In 1933, fifty years ago, the thirtieth of January fell on a Monday: the beginning of a week, and of much else besides.

It was a hyperborean day in Berlin, befitting that great Prussian capital city, unusually cold. In the Kaiserhof Hotel, his headquarters then, Adolf Hitler rose unusually early. The hotel stood across from a Prussian baroque building which had been built in 1738, two years before Frederick the Great became King. In 1878 Bismarck chose it for the Chancellery of the Reich.

At ten o'clock Hitler, Goering, and Frick came out of the Kaiserhof. There was a surge of excitement. They were not going to the Chancellery. They walked past it, passing the President's apartments, to a building close by on the Wilhelmsstrasse, containing the apartment of Franz von Papen. After half an hour Hitler's friends, crowded against the windows of the Kaiserhof, saw a small group: Hitler, Goering, Frick, Papen, and others coming back, talking. They went into the Chancellery, up to the spacious anteroom of the President's Secretary Meissner, arguing still. Then Meissner came in. Their discussions had to stop. *Der alte Herr*, the Old Gentleman, was waiting. In the office of the Reich President Hindenburg sat behind Bismarck's desk. It was eleven-fifteen.

At noon they came out into the cold grey Berlin air. There was a small crowd. Behind the windowpanes of the Kaiserhof Goebbels and the Nazi chieftains were feverish. Had Hindenburg appointed Hitler? One look at the faces: he had. Papen and Goering were smiling. Hitler was not; but he looked up at them. Now they knew.

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Now Adolf Hitler was the Chancellor of Germany. Yet his cabinet was not a Nazi one. It consisted of nine Conservatives and two Nazis, Goering and Frick, beside Hitler. That evening Papen told his friends: "Wir haben ihn uns engagiert." "He was reined in," Hitler was on Papen's team now. Papen was wrong. It was the Nazis, not the Conservatives, who would rule Germany for the twelve years to come.

That evening, at seven, there began a march of triumph, a torchlight parade of Nazi troops and groups, nearly a mile long. Hindenburg watched it behind a window; so did Hitler. He was deeply moved. He turned to the group around him. "Now we are together; and so we will stay till the last breath of every one of us." Next to him stood Count Helldorf, the SA leader of Great-Berlin, and another SA leader, Karl Ernst. The first was to be hanged eleven years later, the second was to

be shot less than two years later, on Hitler's orders. So Hitler was wrong too: but that didn't matter.

That evening there were six million Germans without jobs. Two years later there were but a few thousand. Six years later Adolf Hitler was the master of a Great German Reich, and the most powerful and feared statesman in the world. On that thirtieth of January in 1933 he would enter the monumental marble halls of a new Reich Chancellery, designed and built by Albert Speer, perhaps the most impressive government building of the twentieth century. Another six years and three months later that Chancellery was a mound of rubble. Underneath its garden, under another pile of rubble, Hitler killed himself. That day, too, was the thirtieth of a month, and a Monday.

How did this former Austrian waif, a bohemian painter, a self-made demagogue, the plotter of a failed

coup d'état, who had not even become a citizen of Germany until seven months before, about whom the old Hindenburg had made scathing comments only two months before, become the Chancellor of the Reich? In 1928 only one of every thirty-six German voters had chosen Hitler's party. In 1930 one of five or six. In 1932 (there were four elections in that year) at least one of three, at times almost two of five. The Nazis had become the largest party in Germany. Yet Hindenburg did not want to appoint Hitler. Eventually the Conservatives, headed by Papen with his vulpine charm, chose to make common cause with Hitler. They persuaded Hindenburg to get rid of the military politician, Chancellor General Schleicher. All of this is an interesting and even instructive story, retold by many historians. Few of them have concentrated on the larger meaning of these events.

There was the political genius of Hitler. People underestimated this then; they underestimate it even now. People thought, and many still think, that he was nothing more than a rabble-rouser, or a nationalist idealist without political experience. Yet the events leading to his appointment to the Chancellery show that his political ability at least matched his oratorical one. He manipulated and steered the experienced politicians and statesmen, until they convinced themselves to give him what he wanted, in exchange for small compromises that melted away to nothing.

There was the failure of the parliamentary, the liberal, the republican democracy of the Weimar Germany before Hitler. Already in 1932 the only possible alternative to the Nazis may have been a military dictatorship. At the end of that year, thirteen years after the Treaty of Versailles had declared the demilitarization of the Germans, both the President and



the Chancellor of Germany were generals. Unfortunately General Schleicher was a political dilettante. He tried to split the Nazi party in vain; in the end Hitler (and Papen) accused him of preparing a military coup d'état, falsely so. Schleicher had the support neither of Hindenburg nor of his fellow generals.

And there was the historical condition, full of meaning for us even now, when for nearly forty years we have been living under the shadow of what seems to be The Great Confrontation of the Twentieth Century, that of Capitalism vs. Marxism, or of Democracy vs. Communism. This is what our leaders believe; this is the thesis of all kinds of contemporary historians and cold war theorists: the Great Confrontation began in 1917, with Lenin and Wilson. Yet Hitler rose in Germany when both Soviet Russia and the United States had removed themselves from Europe, and when Lenin and Wilson were dying, broken men. After 1920 there arose a new force in Europe, Fascism (a very inadequate term* but which, for the sake of intellectual shorthand, must do) whose prime incarnation was to be Hitler's Germany, and which eventually proved so powerful that it took a world war and the combined forces of Communism and Democracy, the armies of the British, the American, and the Russian empires, to defeat it: neither the Anglo-Americans nor the Russians could do it alone.

In 1933 Hitler rode the wave of the future. That day, 30 January 1933—one of those curious coincidences that logicians loathe—was a starry day in the life of Ezra Pound. Mussolini received him, for the first and last time in his life, an event of which

Pound was so proud that he kept the letter of invitation framed on his wall. Did they talk about Hitler? I doubt it. Mussolini had read, or pretended to have read, Pound's draft of the *XXX Cantos*. Pound was deeply moved and impressed. He wrote that Mussolini was "The Boss," a man able to go "unhesitant to the root." Pound, too, was wrong: the man who would go unhesitant to the root, the real radical, was not Mussolini, it was Hitler.

In 1933 there were millions of Communists and Social Democrats within Germany. Against Hitler their convictions and resolutions amounted to nothing. There are still historians and political "scientists" who blame the coming of Hitler on the economic conditions of the Depression. The Depression affected Germany worse than any other country in the world, including the United States; and Germany was the fatherland of Marxism. Yet the number of Com-

*While Mussolini was the founder of Fascism, Hitler was not the founder of National Socialism; but the latter term was more precise. Hitler was not a Fascist (he once told one of his confidants that Fascism was only "a half-job"); but, in more than one way, Mussolini and Stalin were national socialists. As early as 1932 Stalin proscribed the term "National Socialist" and "Nazi" from the Communist vocabulary—ever since that time the proper Soviet reference has been "Fascists" or "Hitlerites"—for a good reason: people might have recognized that national socialist was exactly what Stalin and the Soviet Union had become. Because of the kind of sloppy and dishonest intellectual habits so typical of this century "Fascist" and "Fascism," at first promoted by fellow-travelers, thereafter became the common term denominating all kinds of non-leftist dictatorships, at the cost of historical accuracy and truth.

munist votes hardly rose during the entire period from 1930 to 1933. The hopes and the desires of the German masses were gathering around Hitler and his party, who never spoke in economic terms, indeed, who had no economic program at all. ("Why should I nationalize the industries?" Hitler once said. "I shall nationalize the people.") Like 1914, 1933 showed up—or, more precisely, it should have showed up—the antiquated intellectual categories of Marxism, and the most widespread idiocy of the twentieth century, the belief in Economic Man. Wedding, Red Wedding, was the name of a working-class Berlin district, the grimy citadel of Central European Communism and Socialism. In February 1933 red swastika flags sprouted like large vulgar flowers from the windows of those dark tenements. They had outnumbered the red flags with the hammer and sickle, hanging limp. The remaining Marxists were bitter with the pain of jealousy. Those whom they had believed to be theirs had heard the voice of Hitler, they had chosen to be married to Hitler. Wedding, 1933.

Hitler also knew another thing: that marriage was more respectable than rape, and that anti-Communism was more popular and respectable than Communism. In order to be entrusted with power he had to get the Respectables on his side. When Hindenburg received him in late November 1932 Hitler said, among other things: "The Bolshevization of the masses proceeds rapidly." He knew that this was not true. He also knew that this was the kind of argument that would impress Hindenburg and the Conservatives and the industrialists. Unlike ten years before, when his *putsch* was shot to pieces in a Munich street, he would become the ruler of Germany legally, constitutionally, not against but with the support of the most respectable elements in Germany. And so he arrived at the thirtieth of January. He knew that his opponents as well as his newly gathered associates were hollow men. He held them in the hollow of his hand. He knew what he was doing. The others did not.

There were few people in the world who knew what Hitler's appointment meant. The national-liberal *Kölnische Zeitung* wrote: this "Cabinet of national concentration may bring the tranquillity to Germany she so urgently needs." The Catholic *Germania*: the new cabinet "has established clearness and unequivocal responsibility." The Socialist *Vorwärts*: the cabinet was made up of

"agrarian and capitalist reactionaries." Among the future victims of Hitler the Czechoslovak press reported that he "has been made a prisoner of the Conservatives." Among his future allies the Italian press chortled with satisfaction: here was a German who followed the model that Mussolini had given the world. The *London Times* was grey, bland, fairly noncommittal. The Soviet press commented not at all. There was one exception: the Polish nationalist newspapers. ("Reich Shows True Face. Europe Will Soon Know the German Danger and The Sooner The Better.") But who would listen to (let alone trust) Polish nationalists? While preparing this article I looked up the contemporary *New York Times*. The front page of January 30, 1933 carried the following headlines and articles:

ROOSEVELT AND LINDSAY FIND A BASIS FOR BRITISH DEBTS' MEETINGS IN MARCH

YOUNG ASKS NAME NOT TO BE CONSIDERED FOR A CABINET POST
SARA TEASDALE, POET FOUND DEAD
BRITON URGES RISE IN VALUE OF SILVER

DALADIER FORMING CABINET IN FRANCE WITH SOCIALIST AID

To the left, below the obituary obeisance to the late Miss Teasdale, there was an article: HITLER FAVORED IN REICH. The Berlin correspondent wrote, among other things: "Herr Hitler is reported to be in a more docile frame of mind." He also reported (this was a subhead): "100,000 Republicans at Rally in Berlin Voice Their Readiness to 'Mount the Barricades'"—something that never happened, a non-event. Next day this correspondent cabled from Berlin: "The composition of the Cabinet leaves Herr Hitler no scope for gratification of any dictatorial ambition." An article followed on page 3: "Hitler Puts Aside Aim to be Dictator." "Hitler News Fails to Stir Wall Street." For the first time there was an editorial about Hitler, as soothing and obtuse as editorials so often are, with a good dosing of "facts" of the future (that is, out of the editorial writer's wearisome imagination): "Germany's foreign policy will remain unchanged. Best assurance of all is the fact that President Hindenburg will retain supreme command, prepared to unmake Hitler as quickly as he has made him. . . . Much of Hitler's old electoral thunder has either been stolen from him or has died down into a negligible rumble." "Negligible rumble" was good.

PAPEN IS SEEN IN CONTROL, said the *New York Times* headline on



February 1. "Close scrutiny of the cabinet line-up . . . would seem to show that Herr Hitler has merely been taken in tow. . . . It is generally felt that the government is Colonel von Papen's show." "It is generally felt" . . . the kind of Impersonal Passive that bedevils us during this century, whether in students' papers or in PR releases. Surely this was not what Professor Ernst Cohen felt that day. There were, as yet, no anti-Semitic regulations in Germany (indeed, the German Foreign Ministry issued a circular, instructing German diplomatic posts abroad to assure people that nothing of that kind was to be expected); but in the university of Breslau Nazi students had broken into Cohen's classroom and threatened to throw him out of the window. Thereupon the president of the university, a good old Conservative Lutheran *Staatsbeamter* and *Hochgelehrter*, Rector *Magnificus*, chose to suspend the professor, not the students, in the name of law and order, no doubt.

On February 3 an American university president (Thomas S. Baker of the Carnegie Institute of Technology) reported in the *New York Times* that he had watched the Nazi torchlight procession on the night of Hitler's appointment. It "seemed somewhat tame," he wrote. "Hitler is hardly a Napoleon." The *Times* editorial that day: "Hitler is regarded as the prisoner of Von Papen . . . and the Generals." "There is also the fact"—another of those Facts—"that the Hindenburg and Hitler! cry does not carry conviction." By February 4 all references to Germany disappeared from the front page. During the entire week after Hitler's appointment

among the forty or fifty Letters to the Editor printed in the *New York Times* not one spoke about Germany or Hitler.

Seven weeks after Hitler's appointment the elected representatives of the German people (the Communist deputies were the only ones excluded from the new Reichstag) voted,

During the entire week after Hitler's appointment among the forty or fifty Letters to the Editor printed in the New York Times not one spoke about Germany or Hitler.

nearly five to one, to give Hitler all the dictatorial powers he wanted. Six years later he was the dominator of Europe, the head of a German Reich greater than Bismarck's had ever been. Unlike Bismarck, he had achieved this without wars. Like Bismarck, he made a pact with Russia. Unlike Bismarck's, that pact was to be an instrument not of peace but of war.

Throughout his life Hitler was underestimated. In 1919, when he began to speak in public, those who had known him before laughed at his aspirations. Ten years later people said that he might be a successful speaker but he had no political talent. In 1933 people said that Hitler might mislead the befuddled Germans but that such an uninstructed and inexperienced man would be no match for the statesmen of Europe. They were wrong.

Hitler (and Goebbels) had a governing idea. They saw the struggle for Europe as if that were but a repetition, on a larger scale, of the struggle which they had fought and won in Germany in 1933. Then the once few National Socialists had overcome all of their opponents—the Conservatives, the Democrats, the Socialists, the Communists—because they represented and incarnated an idea that was stronger than were the ideas of their opponents. So the new Germany would overcome the capitalist democracies in the West and the primitive mass of Soviet Russia in the east. Wasn't it thus that this erstwhile poor and defeated Germany became the principal power of Europe, indifferent to the potential opposition of the French and the British Empires, no matter how large these were on the map, no matter how large their natural resources? They were hesitant and weak. To deal with a Chamberlain would be no more trouble than to deal with a Papen had been.

When Hitler's war began, that too

was to be a repetition on a larger scale of what had happened in January 1933. One Nazi had been worth two Communists or three Socialists in the streets or on the podiums of Germany then. One German soldier was worth at least two Russian soldiers or three French soldiers. Hitler was convinced of this. There was enough truth in it to bring him close to victory; but no further.

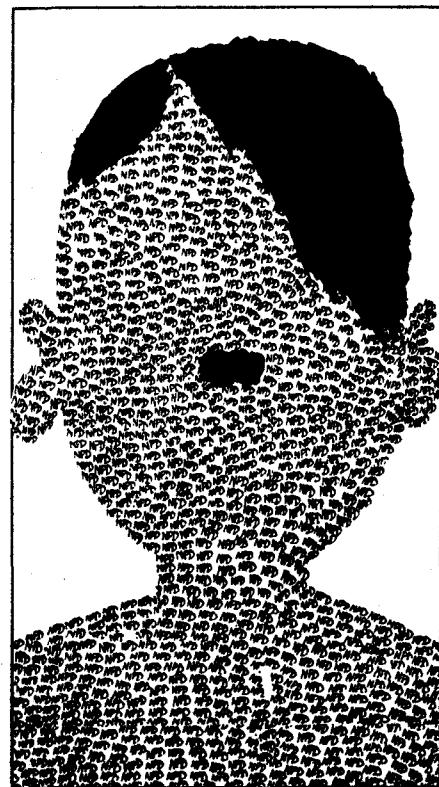
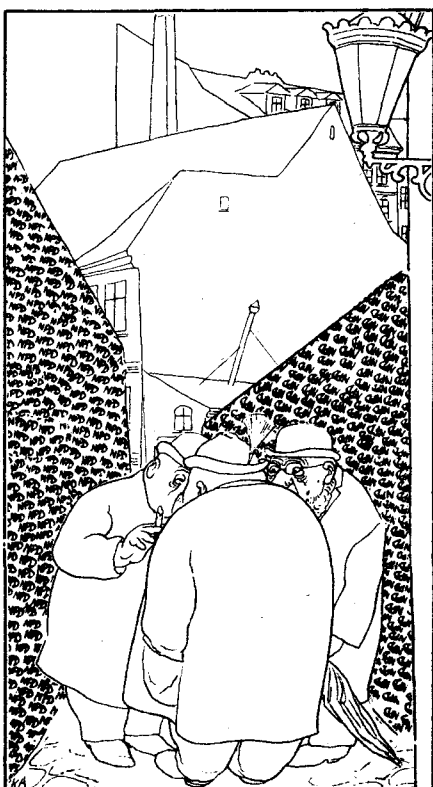
Eventually he failed because Germany was one thing, and the rest of the world another. Hitler had won the Germans because inside every German Communist and inside every German Socialist there was a German nationalist; because his Nazis appealed to certain atavistic German sentiments and ideas. Inside every British or Polish or French or Russian or American workingman there was a nationalist, too: but not a German one. And in the end there were not two or three but five or ten enemy soldiers converging on every German one. On 30 January 1933 Hitler began to paint Germany in his colors. He saw the world according to his colors. He painted himself into a corner in the end.

Regarding that thirtieth of January there was yet another coincidence. Adolf Hitler came to power on Franklin Roosevelt's birthday. The accepted opinion, according to which Hitler knew nothing about the United States, is untrue. But he gave relatively little thought to the United States until the winter of 1938-39 when he began to realize that his greatest opponent might be Roosevelt. Why had the British begun to oppose him? he asked. Because behind them was Roosevelt; and behind Roosevelt he saw the Jews. He said as much about Roosevelt and the Jews in a speech on January 30, 1939, when he occupied the new Chancellery, on the sixth anniversary of his Chancellorship. He warned Jews "inside and outside Europe" that if they were "to succeed" in bringing about a second world war, the result would be "the annihilation of the Jewish race throughout Europe"—words that went largely unheeded. His hatred of Roosevelt eventually soared even beyond his hatred for Churchill (not to speak of Stalin of whom he would speak with respect and even with admiration throughout the war). In one sense his rabid

assessment of Roosevelt was correct. Had the United States been led by an isolationist the British might not have declared war on him in 1939 or fought him as they did in 1940. Had someone like Hoover been President in 1940 Hitler might have won his European war.

Churchill knew that. So did de Gaulle. They were old-fashioned patriots, who as early as 1933 recognized what kind of man Hitler was and what his power meant, better than the Marxists and better than conservatives of the kind of a Chamberlain or a Pétain. In 1940 Churchill and de Gaulle proved true to themselves. Within Germany; too, the handful of brave men who attempted the Tyrannicide of 1944, to kill Hitler, who, in their minds, had brought Germany not only close to defeat but who had covered the German name with infamy, were men who, for the most part, were moved by convictions that were reactionary and not merely conservative, religious and not merely political: they were not modern nationalists but old-fashioned patriots.

In any event it was Hitler and not Mussolini or Lenin or Stalin or Mao who was the greatest revolutionary in the history of the twentieth century—just as four hundred years before, at the opening of the Modern Age, Luther had been a greater revolutionary than Zwingli or Calvin. Like Luther, Hitler wanted to unite the greater German nation. Unlike Luther, his failure was not partial but complete. The division of Europe, of Germany, of Berlin was the result of his war; and the record of his cruelties will darken his name until civilization perishes from this earth. □



Luigi Barzini

RETURN TO RESPECTABILITY

Protean Germany's search for a better model.

That many Germans were still human beings, civilized Europeans and Christians in spite of everything, was evident in Italy only toward the end of the war. In the few months before the liberation of Rome, I lived with my wife and two baby daughters in an isolated white house on the sea outside Porto Santo Stefano. I was supposed to be under constant police control as an anti-Fascist condemned to *confino*. But the situation was too confused for me to be really watched. There were more pressing things. The little port was being used to unload German supplies for Cassino. It was bombed day and night, during the day by the Americans and during the night by the British; the town was reduced to gaping holes and masses of dusty ruins. Inevitably, I had to become acquainted with many Germans. One day, a naval officer with an arrogant supercilious manner visited us. He had received the order to blow up our house as it was presumably used at night by Allied bombers as a target on their flight to their objectives. He ordered us to get out immediately while his men prepared the mines. Then he noticed a Scotch terrier bitch of ours which had given birth to three pups. He smiled, petted the black mother, lifted one of the tiny dogs in his arms, and finally proposed he would forget the whole thing, our evacuation and the blowing up of the house, in exchange for a male puppy. (I remember the dog's name. It was Rollo. I have forgotten the officer's.)

In an antiaircraft battery not far from us was a strange elderly soldier who paid us a visit one night after sundown. He introduced himself, Doktor Nassau, a medical doctor from

somewhere near Hamburg. He spoke good English. He had started the war as a captain, he told us, but, because of some unguarded remarks he had made, had been tried, demoted, and sent as a medical orderly, to a very dangerous place where the authorities hoped he would die any day. He offered us his services. He visited us always at night. He explained, "I come to you after dark not to compromise you. You will not be accused later of having had contacts with a German soldier." And he chuckled. He watched over our two baby girls (they fortunately enjoyed good health). He brought us medicines we needed. We gave him an omelette, a glass or two of wine, and some fruit every time he came. We talked about the war. Dr. Nassau (God bless him wherever he is) had no illusions. He knew what his country had done. He said, "Doctor Goebbels explains to us why we cannot lose this war. He forgets to tell us how we can win it, ha ha . . ." His political ideas were those of an elderly gentleman. He was certain that once Germany was

rid of Hitler and the party, the *Hohenzollern* would come back and there would be once again a kaiser in Berlin. "Wilhelm might have been a bad and tactless emperor and made many horrible mistakes," Dr. Nassau used to say, "but he was infinitely better than our present führer. To begin with, Wilhelm was a gentleman, after all, a grandson of Queen Victoria." We knew that many Germans in uniform secretly shared Dr. Nassau's doubts, if not his hopes, perhaps more than half of them, surely the sailors and the naval officers. But none of them could help obeying orders like automatons. They were born obedient. An Italian friend of mine, who was fighting in the underground and visited us once in a while during the night to get supplies and news, used to say, "I would hate to be shot by a firing squad composed of men who had my same ideas."

I returned to Germany after the war where I diligently interviewed the

Allied high commissioners and Dr. Konrad Adenauer on the future of the country. What I wanted to know was what everybody wanted to know, what was the real nature of these people? Were they ineluctably condemned to make wars? Could they be trusted? Could they become free men, conduct themselves responsibly as members of the Western community?

André François-Poncet, the French high commissioner, was pensive and preoccupied. He had a little mustache, wore a wing collar and a polka-dotted bow tie like Adolphe Menjou. He saw one great danger. "Suppose," he told me, "the Germans come to an agreement with the Russians. They did it after the First World War at Rapallo. They did it in 1939. We all know that every time they come to an agreement with the Russians they arrive in Paris."

Konrad Adenauer, whom I saw the following day, asked me what François-Poncet had said. I repeated his words. Adenauer snorted. "Paris? They go much beyond!" he said with some pride. This was, of course, not quite true. They went beyond only once, in 1940. However, he excluded the possibility of his country's coming to an agreement with the Russians within the near future. "Impossible," he said.

John McCloy, the American high commissioner, was full of hope and doubts. "Can they become democratic?" I asked. (The German regime was then called *kanzlerdemokratie* by clever journalists, a democracy completely dominated by the chancellor.) "There are many heartwarming signs," McCloy answered. "To be sure a great number of Germans, like Konrad Adenauer and millions of others, had been secretly democratic all the time. Many have now discovered the value of democratic ideas at their own heavy cost. Defeat is a great teacher. Many more



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are willing to learn. The American overwhelming success in peace and war is an impressive example." But he pointed out it was not a simple question of indoctrination and the enforcement of treaties. It was a deeper and more complex problem. Sometimes old German prejudices cropped up, McCloy said; and he told me this story. A few weeks before, a German count had invited American officers to go shooting on his lands; they came dressed as Americans do in shabby old clothes and not in the chic new hunting outfits the Europeans prefer. One of the American officers, taken by mistake for some animal or other as he was crawling behind a bush, was killed, and the count was arrested and tried. His lawyer offered two defenses: (a) the count did not know the victim was an American; (b) the count did not know the victim was an officer. But this, McCloy said, was not typical. It was only a residue of past feudal ways of thinking, going back to the times when it was considered an unfortunate but forgivable error to kill a peasant or a private, and a serious crime to kill a gentleman and an officer, especially if he belonged to a conquering army.

To compare, as all of us journalists did in those years, Berlin under the Weimar Republic, Berlin under the Nazis, with Bonn, in an attempt to measure the change in the German soul and way of life after the defeat, was deceptive and dishonest. One had always been an ugly, bustling, cosmopolitan capital, fermenting with new ideas, the other a sleepy garden city on the river, built for scholars and retired apoplectic old people. (The depressive climate notoriously lowered their blood pressure.) Nevertheless, the very choice of Bonn (a fortuitous choice, to be sure, as many fatal choices are in history, the consequence of the fortuitous decision of some obscure American officer to nominate once again Adenauer as mayor of Cologne, and later the fortuitous decision of some obscure British officer to dismiss him as too old and politically incompetent, which gave him time to organize a brand-new party; Adenauer lived across the river from Bonn and chose Bonn as a convenient temporary capital, convenient for him) could be interpreted as the symbol of the new start. It was as if the little town on the Rhine had really been selected by a divine film director (or designed and built by his divine art director) as the perfect background for a tale full of nostalgia, yearning for the old-fashioned virtues, for tranquillity,

amiability, security, *gemutlichkeit*, law and order, a life among books and flowers and children and dogs and good wines; the very antithesis of the Nazi ideals. The two cities, of course, had been there all the time, two opposite and irreconcilable aspects of Protean Germany, as mutable as the sea. One, the seat of the mighty, mystical, loquacious, imprudent, unpredictable kaiser and of the demented, diabolical Hitler, murderer of millions; and the other the civilized retreat for the sagacious, patient, firm, and prudent old *oberburgermeister* of Cologne and people like him.

Like many other hurried observers I did not penetrate below the surface and investigated only the most evident aspects of postwar Adenauer Germany. Maybe a deeper knowledge would have blurred my impressions. I merely tried to meet as many people as I could from all walks of life, visit their houses, eat their food, listen to reminiscences and hopes. What interested me above all was to explore the ease with which they had adapted themselves to be proper characters in the Adenauer show. Maybe, as McCloy said, some of them had been all the time, under the uniforms, what they now appeared to be, and did not have to adapt themselves so much as reveal themselves. Who knows? My impressions were surely also influenced by the architecture. Most of the town (it was fairly intact then, without skyscrapers and modern ministerial buildings) appeared to have been designed by the artists who made nineteenth-century German Christmas cards, *Adventskalender*, or valentines, adorned with rococo decorations festooned with flowers, birds, and paper lace. Other parts of town, the old ones, were designed by the artists who made steel engravings of squares with fountains and old buildings and carriages for tourists to take home as souvenirs. When you visited one of the old-fashioned little villas you were struck by the 1900 decor, the oil portraits of grandfather and grandmother, he in his uniform with imperial decorations and she in her ball dress, by the fringed draperies and curtains, the potted plants, the fretwork furniture in the living room or the heavy dining room furniture of elaborately carved walnut. In the entrance hall you usually found felt pads on which you were asked to place your feet and not to walk but slide (as a long-distance skier does), so that you did not mark the well-waxed floors but increased their sheen. Everything that could be was washed, shined, varnished, polished, rubbed, gleaming. Evidently Aden-

auer, the Restorer, had somehow led his people back to his youth, more than a half-century before.

There has always been a mysterious capacity of rulers in many centuries and countries to shape their people physically and morally. Frenchmen wore whiskers à la Napoleon III and their women Eugenie's crinolines until 1870; Italians cut their hair short and flat on top a la Umberto I until 1900 and wore mustaches like Victor Emmanuel III later. Most high officials in Vienna looked like Franz Joseph, with a shaven chin and sidewhiskers joining their mustache in a graceful curve. Great Britain adopted Queen Victoria and Albert's style of life and moral virtues. English dandies left the last button of their waistcoats unbuttoned like Edward VII. Piedmontese families today still unthinkingly give their children their grand-

parents' names, those of long dead princes and kings of the House of Savoy: Charles Albert, Humbert, Emmanuel Philibert, or Amadeus. And of course, vice versa, foreign princes who have not one drop of their subjects' blood in their veins somehow acquire national traits to the point of becoming national caricatures, more typical of their country than any native. The Hapsburg-Lorraine grand dukes of Tuscany were so Tuscan they could be used as sociological specimens in textbooks. The Bourbon kings of Naples, of French and Austrian blood, spoke their people's dialect and had the natives' quick and irreverent wit. The present king of Spain, whose Spanish ancestry is tenuous, looks and behaves like a hidalgo from way back.

It is therefore not surprising that Dr. Adenauer managed to transform the malleable Germans into his image, after his likeness. He himself did not look like a German. His old

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and wrinkled face reminded you of an ancient turtle or a Japanese mask. Morally, however, he was the archetype of a West German, the inhabitants of the Rhineland-Palatinate, born within the borders of the old Roman Empire, beyond which the grapes, Roman civilization, and Roman law did not take root. In fact the northernmost vineyards in Eu-

some actually designed by French architects. Or the ease and thoroughness with which the Hamburgers imitated the English. Or the ease and thoroughness with which Germans had all apparently become Prussians almost overnight after 1871. Or the ease and thoroughness with which Munich was filled with scholarly copies of Florentine, Venetian, and

...what was the real nature of these people? Were they ineluctably condemned to make wars?

rope are to be found in Rhöndorf, Adenauer's own village. The physical difference between the two Germans is sometimes perceptible, especially to a Southerner's eye. The great forests, the wild moors, the barbaric romantic landscapes are in contrast to the tidy, man-made, civilized landscapes of Roman Germany. Many Germans from his region and farther south traditionally thought their countrymen beyond the Elbe still belonged to wild unpredictable tribes and had to be kept at a distance. (This is one of the two reasons why the chancellor bore the separation from East Germany with great fortitude. The second was that there was little he could do about it.) He was definitely a European, a German European, a Catholic, a drinker of fine wines (and dry martinis), a cultivator of prize roses, and a man of his times. There was nothing Nibelungian about him.

Adenauer was elected chancellor by a slim majority: one vote. When asked if he had voted for himself, he said proudly, "Yes, of course I did. And it turned out to be a happy inspiration." His influence as a founding father was fundamental. He was old enough to remember and had had the time and leisure to analyze all the mistakes made by the framers of the Weimar constitution in 1919. He avoided them all. He created the new Federal Republic as a solid, durable, and practical machine. He inspired its fundamental laws, its guiding philosophy, and, as I said, the manners and beliefs of its citizens. He chose its friends and allies.

He did all this with an ease and thoroughness that were baffling to an Italian. I could not help thinking (for instance) of the ease and thoroughness with which in the eighteenth-century German princelings had adopted French tastes. They spoke French, wrote French, ate French, danced French, built imitation rococo French chateaus all over the country, all curlicues and contorted statuary,

other Italian Renaissance buildings in the last century. All this, of course, was due to one puzzling quality, the people's adaptability, their blotting-paper capacity at all times to absorb and improve alien conceptions. Was not Nazism (among other things) a thoroughly perfected and efficient copy of disorganized and ramshackle fascism, down to the Roman salute? (Nobody really knows if the Romans saluted each other and the emperor by raising their right arms. The salute was probably invented at the beginning of the century by the forgotten director of a silent movie version of *Quo Vadis* or *Fabiola*.) Nevertheless, in spite of rococo chateaus, Renaissance palazzi, American skyscrapers, or the rigidly extended right arms, there always was and is something perennially and unchangingly German. The Germans call it *Deutschtum*. What was it? What is it?

The later model for all things evidently was (after Dr. Adenauer's resurrection of Wilhelmine Germany) the United States, the conquering superpower that had destroyed Nazism in 1945 (and most of Germany at the same time) with the might of its industries, the efficiency of its machines, the courage of its people, the intelligence of its leaders, and the infallibility of its political ideas. This was not surprising. But as always, the meticulous German imitations of the USA, like most German imitations of foreign models in the past, went much beyond the originals. They were definite improvements—the United States as it would have liked to be and managed to be only sporadically, with difficulty, only here and there. Surely it was never as tidy, clean, law-abiding, disciplined, well-administered, docile, punctual, rigorous, and prosperous a country as its German copy. This is because of, for one thing, the perennial German compulsion to surpass their teachers.

German firms bought supermarkets in the United States and ran them better and more efficiently than the Americans themselves, who had invented them. German publishers launched mass circulation magazines for women in the American market, American imitations of German imitations of American prototypes. One cannot help remembering how Prussian military thinkers analyzed Napoleon's victorious but somewhat unchanging and unimaginative maneuvers on the battlefield, discovered his secrets, and bettered them in the end; how much more efficient and deadly was the German imperial fleet in 1914 than the British fleet it was built to rival and destroy but did not.

It was also symptomatic and possibly pregnant with future developments that the American model the Germans had idealized, imitated, and perfected and clung to was a little behind the times, yesterday's America, *l'Amérique de papa*. The model was the neat, sedate, industrious, and confident America of a few years before, Truman's and Eisenhower's America, a solid and somewhat predictable country. The choice of the older model was inevitable. To save their pride and honor, the Germans could only admire and imitate the two superpowers that had reduced their country to rubble, destroyed the best fighting machine the world had known, led by the best generals tradition and training and rigorous selection could produce, manned by the best soldiers in history. In the East the Germans obediently adopted and definitely improved on the Soviet model. East Germany is the only eastern "People's Democracy" that has managed to solve a few of the impossible problems of a bureaucratic economy that works nowhere else. In the West the model had

necessarily to be the United States as it appeared to the defeated, humiliated, and hungry Germans at the time of the occupation and the reconstruction.

The United States surely was at that time, immediately after the war, the most advanced country in practically all fields that mattered. The dollar was the world's lodestar; U.S. industries still dominated all competition. The Republic was solidly founded on firm certainties, moral, political, and economic. It knew it was right; its institutions and principles being the best could not be improved much and were perfectly adaptable to changing times and to foreign countries anywhere. It knew its armed forces were invincible because its weapons were the most advanced and also because it had always fought on the side of justice. Furthermore America was generous and magnanimous and humanitarian, securely guided by its ideals and virtues. It was capable, time and again when necessary, at critical moments, to produce from the sleeve of history elites of *homines novi*—noble, committed, and competent leaders, occasionally even one great man, a great or nearly great President. These men were capable of leading their nation to prosperity in times of depression. The generals could lead it to victory in great wars and, after the last world war, were capable of firmly facing the Soviet threat. Its statesmen could protect, defend, reassure, and lead the free world with ease.

This America, of course, was not entirely imaginary. But it was never as good as the Germans and many foreigners imagined or wanted to imagine it. Its foreign policy was never as far-seeing, enlightened, and coherent, its elites as competent and imaginative, its economy as free from flaws. Later, in fact, some cracks began to show even from a distance. Particularly the severe strains and delusions of the last decades impaired the image of the United States. Somehow the elites did not seem as capable, the ideas as valid for all seasons, the armed forces as invincible, the Presidents always as admirable as some of their famous predecessors; foreign policy seemed at times more undecided, ineffectual, and contradictory, particularly under Jimmy Carter. There were widespread doubts in western Europe (and in Germany above all) whether a more mature and wiser but weaker and more uncertain America, the post-Vietnam and post-Watergate America, or the more abrupt, belligerent, defiant, and impatient America of Reagan's Administration, might



be willing or capable of protecting Europe—and first of all the Bundesrepublik which is manning the ramparts—from Soviet aggression.

The time had perhaps come for Germany gradually to abandon the comforting security of the past decades, the idea that to imitate the

United States, take care of the economy, leave most decisions to the Americans' wisdom and the protection of the West to their nuclear weapons was enough to secure tranquillity. To be sure Europeans (including Germans) have to stick with their great ally. They certainly

cannot get along by themselves. The Allies could not in 1917 nor the United Nations in 1941. But this time everybody in Europe had to reexamine all contemporary problems from scratch. The heaviest burden naturally fell on Germany's shoulders, once again the strongest nation

in Europe. This alarmed all history-conscious Europeans a little. It alarmed the Germans most of all. They were scared (as Bismarck was) to see their country acquire once more an indisputable hegemony over the Continent and the responsibility for its future. □

Taki

POLITIQUE INTERNATIONALE: FLEET STREET FOPPERY

LONDON—My first reaction on hearing there was a Bulgarian and an Andropov connection in the plot to murder the Pope was relief. Yes, dear readers, relief. Relief from the *Sunday Times*, the biggest, most boring, and, as far as I'm concerned, most bogus of English newspapers. Up until the Bulgarian connection was revealed, the *Sunday Times* had been concentrating on long investigative pieces on each and every hirsute lesbian ever to spend a night outside a Pershing II missile site. Ditto for the *Observer*, a newspaper people in asylums are forced to read whenever Valium proves an inadequate sleep-inducing drug. The *Observer* is torn between its love for hirsute lesbians who want to ban our bombs and its loathing for South Africa. Then, needless to say, there is the *Guardian*, which can only be described as the moral equivalent of a William Kunstler. Need I say more?

Well, I thought to myself, at least now these big phonies will stop messing about and get on with the job of tracking down the people behind the plot to kill John Paul II. Boy, was I ever wrong. Here you have the biggest story since World War II and the *Sunday Times* comes up with a hastily written whitewash so full of lies that the Soviet embassy in London went through seventeen Xerox machines in a three-day orgy

Dr. Taki is The American Spectator's distinguished European editor. His monograph on geopolitical conceptions during the reign of King Ethelred II will be delivered this spring at the Institute Feuilleton de Genève.

of copying with intent to distribute. The author was one Philip Knightley, who ironically looks like Lenin, or tries to anyway, but whose only talent lies in social climbing. I've watched this foolish man for years; he's always playing tennis at some club and then chatting up whomever he deems socially important at the bar afterwards. His greatest catch came three years ago when he managed to invite to dinner the chauffeur of a rather vulgar meat-packing heir, one Lord Vestey.

So much for the crusading free British press. The intellectuals, of course, come out even worse. One of them even went so far as to warn an unsuspecting world that we should forget about the Bulgarian connection. "Remember," said the intrepid brain, "the echo of a bullet at Sarajevo set off World War I." The irony is that it's happened all before. While the dons and the undergraduates of the thirties were busy sleeping with each other, the Germans were getting their act together. What some of these "journalists" would like us to believe is that history does not repeat itself, that there are no modern-day Blunts, Burgesses, not even a Michael Straight.

Well, as one of the world's most meticulous historians, I have recently come to the conclusion that history does repeat itself, and I suspect most of our disinformation journalists know that, too. But this time they hope to lull everybody to sleep, including any latter-day Churchill who might be grumbling about. In fact as I write the Lord Chief Justice

has just revealed that not long ago the *Sunday Times* invented a front-page story. It happened to be about yet another social climber, Michael Fagan, the fellow who supposedly climbed the wall of Buckingham Palace for a midnight chat with the Queen. If they went so far about someone so unimportant, think how far they will go for something that is important. Like nuclear weapons, our lifelines around the Cape of Good Hope, a strong free world versus a weak one.

England has always sent her best and brightest to America, and she continues to do so with her disinformation artists. Take the case of the journalist Christopher Hitchens. He is, needless to say, a Cambridge man, an effete little scribbler who came over as a Senate page but switched to *Mother Jones* after his Senate duties tired him out (or was it the other way around?). Hitchens is married to a Turkish person whom for a long time I mistook for a man because he/she is very, very hairy. The Turkish Cypriot and the Cambridge



grad seethe with revolutionary fervor, until, of course, the right cocktail party comes along. In fact before I saw him in person I always thought Hitchens was an old Communist woman, so bitchy and gossipy and trendy was his style. He reminded me of a red Louella Parsons, or a Marxist Hedda Hopper. In London, Hitchens worked for the *Daily Express* after that newspaper—which, incidentally, is far to the right of *The American Spectator*—made him an offer he could not refuse while he was with Britain's *New Statesman*. That is why I like Hitchens. He is a walking advertisement for capitalism. Sure he's an ideologue and screams a lot about human rights, but when it comes down to the nitty-gritty, it's only money and the good things in life that count. Oh, I almost forgot. He also loves the kind of families that in times past would have horsewhipped him for trespassing on their land.

What I want to know now is why so many Englishmen of the radical-chic persuasion are in the United States. I used to think that they had been sent over to spread disinformation. But I was wrong. These people are clowns, tumblers, Marxist mosquitoes. They might have managed to help ruin the old continent, but America is not as degenerate as they think. Their only success has been to make a good living by knocking American institutions daily and very ferociously, and trying to meet the best families of Newport. I expect to find them working for CBS before long, and I wish them luck in any future operations—sexual or otherwise—as well as on Wall Street. □



EMINENTOES

WOODSTOCK DEMOCRATS

by P.H. Terzian

Not since Hendrik Hertzberg's "Beloved Community" have the Democrats furnished such eloquent testimony about their capacity to govern. Sometime around Memorial Day, it has been revealed, Pat Caddell, Jimmy Carter's statistician, and John Y. Brown, Jr., the governor of Kentucky, intend to produce a "Vigil for America"—"a veritable Woodstock of television," says Caddell in a memorandum, that would "attract the greatest array of talent assembled in a decade to put on a national concert that would be heavily promoted throughout campuses, rock stations, etc.

"It would become an event," he adds, "that would bring in substantial revenues and would give us access to a huge segment of normally apolitical young people." Indeed it would—and, perhaps, Caddell is wiser than he suspects: the Democrats are expert at vigils, and they've got the candles, all right. But the question is the identity of the deceased. It is impossible to say that the Democrats are dead as a governing party, but it is equally impossible to detect the higher forms of political life. They are not even lively, their great joy in the past. Let us just say they are comatose. Not since they dismembered themselves under Lyndon Johnson have the Democrats identified the parts of the whole. Always content to destroy one another in caucus, they remain as divided and embittered as the night they pushed George McGovern onto the convention podium in 1972. It was three in the morning then; the dawn remains to break.

The curious thing about the Democratic party is that it has neither diagnosed its illness nor even admitted it is sick. Opposition gives it a reason to be alive. There is a recurrent shuffling of familiar faces, and while the vocabulary has changed, the issues remain the same. Numbers keep it deluded. The Republicans, meanwhile, can only

benefit from the disunity of the Left: never the majority party in American politics, they remain the executive talent at a legislative disadvantage. In truth, the Democrats could have appropriated the political middle and resumed the leadership role they played from the time of the Crash to Vietnam. But, in national terms, they have chosen to remain in resolute isolation, dividing and subdividing into political vacuoles, promoting the careers of rump parliamentarians, waving the bloody shirt of class warfare. It is a discouraging thing, and dangerous, too.

Consider the "Beloved Community." It was rejected as the theme of the Carter Administration, but only just; and after all, first impressions are usually most revealing, and working titles tell an interesting story. What did it mean? It meant that the Democrats had painted themselves into a lachrymose corner, and there they remain. A nation is not a "community" and a

community, surely, cannot be a nation. A beloved community is just the sort of onanistic fraternity the American public neither needs nor wants. So with a "Vigil for America"—although I can guess a less condescending note will be struck before it goes on the air. A vigil is scarcely what gladdens the political heart; a candlelight parade is not the stuff of which governments are made. Once upon a time the Democrats supposed they could be the party of "the poor, the black, and the young." Now they are the standard bearers of the apolitical college students and the audiences of rock stations.

The Democrats, unfortunately, are bankrupt. A rejuvenated Tip O'Neill is the closest they come to charisma; their manifesto is a contradictory brew of trade unionism and high technology. Burgeoning steel mills and spreading day-care centers are things of the past. It is as though the lunatic theorems of Jerry Brown were respectable now that he has been consigned to the political dustbin. Of

course, the Democrats have never flourished in a vacuum; it is a perilous state of affairs for them. Like Chesterton's atheist, they have rejected something in order to believe in anything. It was Jimmy Carter's genius to personify the void: a man who could appoint Andrew Young to high office and admonish federal workers to cease living in sin surely deserved a nomination. A politician who can reconcile the worst political instincts is bound to succeed, and a statesman who can stir his audience deserves a place on the evening news. The trouble, of course, is that passion is not yet the same as leadership, and while emotion sustains the faithful through elections, it can lead to a painful disappointment in the morning. The Democrats, riding on Watergate, hitched themselves to Jimmy Carter. Seizing the political advantage, they were prepared to do anything.

Consider the legislature. The Democrats have failed at everything except bemoaning Ronald Reagan. The only party discipline they have invoked was to expel one errant member from the House. Relieved of responsibility, they have fallen back into reliable refuge: fear, as they know from experience, is what sells newspapers, and they have trafficked in it shamelessly. For that matter, they have exploited a passive ritual—congressional confirmation—for their abundant theatrics. The helpless appointee is a prisoner of civility. What can be said to a senator whose question precludes an answer? And a good advertiser can express the same idea a thousand ways. Our economic travails were not born yesterday, but the Democrats can prescribe the same old nostrums. Our national insecurity is answered by a familiar credulity about the Soviet Union. Even the players are bound to repeat their lines. Walter Mondale, basking in fatuous applause, pledges to make an appointment with Yuri Andropov the morning after Election Day. Alan Cranston, his protrudent jawbone righteously grinding away, intends to devote his every waking



P.H. Terzian is an editor at the Los Angeles Times.

Rising 30

In October 1983 ENCOUNTER will be thirty years old. Off-hand we can't think of any comparable journal in modern times that's lasted that long (in its original guise anyway). The money runs out, the circulation runs down, the editor gets bored, the ideas look jaded—that's the usual pattern, and the reason why so many fine journals have come and gone.

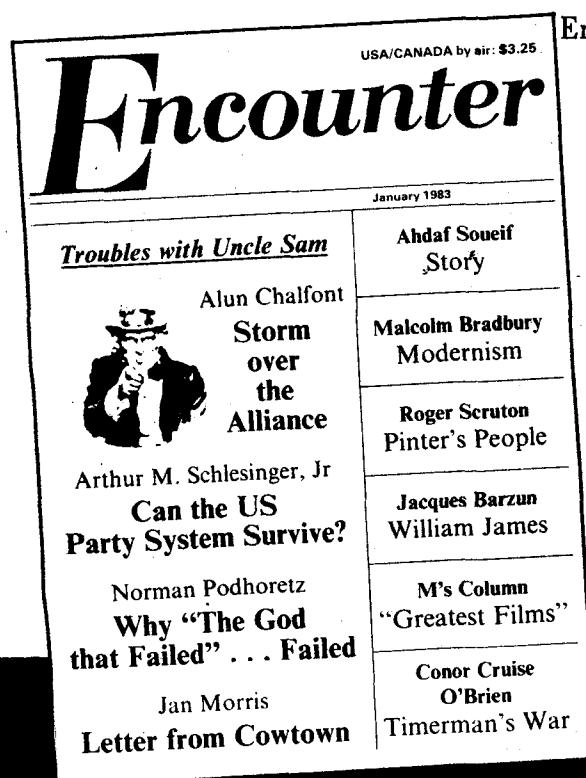
Well, ENCOUNTER is still there, and that can't be just a fluke. Granted the money has sometimes come perilously close to running out; but the circulation is still pretty healthy and the editors don't seem to be bored. No magazine survives for thirty years if its ideas don't move with the times. It's certainly not constantly noticed and quoted, as ENCOUNTER is.

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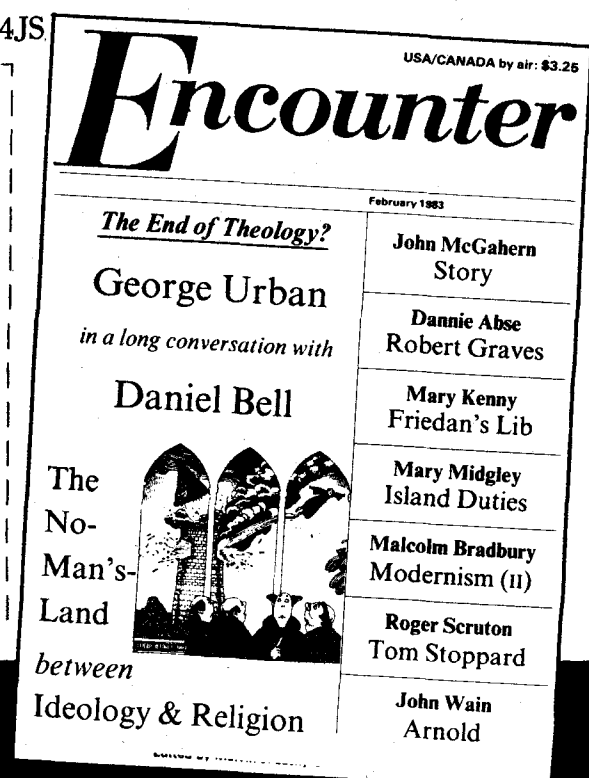
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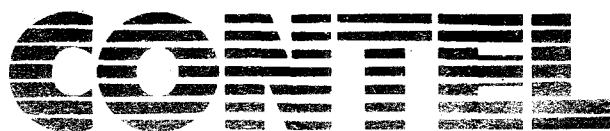




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hour to the passage of SALT II. Gary Hart, well groomed and garrulous, promises two computers in every garage. Only John Glenn keeps his peace, smiling his bashful smile, and offering a good grip with every handshake. Two decades ago he was strapped into a rocket and propelled around the Earth. Now he has buckled himself into the Democratic capsule and waits for the technicians to send him into a second orbit. Alas, he may wait in vain, for the technicians are not very technical. It is an easy thing to oppose the nuclear holocaust, or condemn poverty. It could be easy for the

Democrats and difficult for the country.

After all, it is the Republicans who provide the opportunity. Just as Richard Nixon and his minions squandered their electoral triumph, so Ronald Reagan will learn that the Democrats must profit from his mistakes. No one can now say whether that will come to pass, but the larger question is to judge the greater peril. It is true that Reagan might spoil the prospects for conservatism. But it is also true that the Democrats might prove a familiar

axiom; that is, that exploitation wins elections, even if it fails to govern. There is a danger in a Democratic resurgence; no one can imagine what they might do. And if our electoral process is condemned to a weary quadrennial trade, the range is too open, the standards too porous, for the safety of the Republic. Politics is the art of the probable, not the possible. We now know that anything is possible, and the challenge is to keep the improbable at arm's length.

A "Vigil for America" may seem capricious, but it is an ominous kind of caprice. The consent of the

governed should be not to mourn but to exalt, yet the Democrats will wail and lash themselves insensible if that is what power requires. A "veritable Woodstock" was injurious enough in its original form, but when mob law sets the agenda of a major political party, we should be blessed if Woodstock is all we get. Clearly, the two parties are headed into a kind of perverted competition. The Democrats are still wrestling with demons. And the Republicans—while they may not be on the side of the angels—nonetheless must behave like angels until the spell is lifted. □



BEDPAN HOSPITALITY (II)

by Ernest van den Haag

Recently fate offered me another unsought opportunity to serve as your involuntary hospital reporter.* As before, I found the medical services in the University-run hospital excellent, although there is an unexplained shortage of residents, the physicians who hang around twenty-four hours a day and are essential for emergencies and routine procedures. Since there are too few of them, routine procedures tend to be uncomfortably delayed, while they are busy dealing with emergencies, or in the operating room. Yet, there is no shortage of physicians available for residencies. The cost to the hospital is a negligible proportion of the total charged. Why not have a more adequate number of residents then? Nursing was competent though hard to get. When the bed-bound patient rings a bell (actually a light goes on at the nursing station), he must wait from five to twenty minutes for an electronic voice to inquire about "the problem." Often the delay does not matter, but in an emergency it might be costly. The knowledge that, whatever happens, there will be a delay, is not reassuring.

But it is the hotel and restaurant

part of hospitalization—room, food, furniture, and service—which remains beneath what a third-rate motel would dare to offer. In a hotel a maid comes in once a day to do the room. Simple, isn't it? Not in hospitals. They have found infinitely clever ways to complicate matters. The following separate operations were performed in my room every day: (1) An elderly gentleman came in around 9 a.m. to empty waste-paper baskets; (2) Around 10:30 a young man appeared with a mop. He gingerly caressed parts of the floor

for about two minutes; (3) Around noon another man appeared to do the same for the bathroom; (4) Two hours later a woman appeared to clean the wash basin and the bathroom shelf. (On parting each one left the door open.)

How can this irrational and disruptive procedure be explained? Did some demented administrator read too much about specialization in his college days? Or is it the unions? But why do hotels manage to resist the unions and hospitals do not? Are hospital administrators less in-

terested in the comfort of their guests than hotels are? Quite likely. I found that the ordinary sleeping habits of patients are systematically ignored. Procedures apt to prevent sleep, although ordered as a daily routine for me, were always performed at night. I never found out why.

To the eccentric ways of making up a room one must add other routine matters to realize that a patient cannot count on much undisturbed rest in a hospital. Someone comes in at unpredictable times to make the bed, nurses hand out medications, or check on infusions, several times every day. Three meals a day are brought in and removed; someone brings next day's menu, and picks it up later, after you have made your choices. And there are innumerable tests: hospitals are bloodthirsty. Not all of this is unavoidable. Is it really impossible to bring in next day's menu with the meal and pick it up with the dishes? Or to do the room in a single operation?

Hospital administrators act as prison wardens do, only more so. In hotels, and even in some prisons, one may receive "conjugal visitors." But hospital managers get heart attacks at the mere mention of such a possibility. Hospital rooms must be unlocked for the same reason that prison cells must be locked: to control inmates. Unlike the hotel guest, the patient cannot leave; unlike the prisoner he cannot rebel;



*See my article "Bedpan Hospitality" in the December 1981 issue of *The American Spectator*.

Ernest van den Haag is the John M. Olin Professor of Jurisprudence and Public Policy at Fordham University.

The lamp over my bed was designed and placed with diabolical

I know of no hotel that expects you to share a room with three or four other persons, or even with one other person, you have never met. Hospitals routinely do. Since hotels manage to make decent rooms available for less than \$40 why should a

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room as such be more expensive to a hospital? Why should sick people be expected to give up their privacy when sick, if they don't have to when healthy? I can see no reason why private rooms, as well-furnished as hotel rooms, should not be the rule in hospitals for all paying customers.

Which brings me to the bill. Granting that modern medicine with all its apparatus is costly, the size of the bill still remains a puzzle. Five factors contribute to inflating the cost. (1) Paperwork. This is largely caused by government regulations and can be reduced only by simplifying them. Meanwhile it is horrendous and costly. (2) Overstaffing and

overpaying. Whereas the professional staff barely is adequate in numbers and is far from overpaid, the nonprofessional staff is overpaid (I think there are too many of them, too). How do I know? There are far more people wanting these jobs than there are jobs to give them. They are paid more than is needed to attract them. (3) Hospitals take care of many people who cannot pay and are not insured. This expense should be borne by the community at large, but is not. So, hospitals shift the cost to paying patients and to their insurance carriers. Morally the practice is unjustifiable. That you happen to be hospitalized and are insured, or able to pay, is no reason to stick you, rather than the community, with the cost for all those

who are not. Yet the hospital must make ends meet somehow. The remedy here is legislation providing full reimbursement by taxpayers for those who cannot pay. (4) Medical care has become expensive because of the high and costly technology available to physicians, which has immensely improved care. Yet it is overdone. Rooms, underequipped for comfort, are medically overequipped. (a) Every bed has a costly electrical motor which permits it to be raised and lowered in segments. It's fun and makes it easier to make up the bed. Everything else could be as readily, and more comfortably, achieved by strategically placing pillows. Less fun but much cheaper. (b) Every room has oxygen outlets. But only a small proportion of patients need them. (c)

There is an intercom with loud-speaker in every room; needlessly, since there is a telephone. (5) The costs of hospitalization are paid largely by third parties now, insurance companies and taxpayers (via Medicare or Medicaid). This is one reason why they are so high. The simplest reform is to make sure that, however insured, the patient (except those below the poverty level) pays a percentage of the costs of hospitalization and thus retains an interest in minimizing the expense which no third party will, or can, pursue as readily as he can. Unless the patient regains an interest in minimizing costs, hospitalization will become ever more expensive—and, in the nature of things, ever more inhospitable. □



MEDIAZATION

by Fred Barnes

Harry Reasoner, who is a correspondent on "60 Minutes," was adamant. "I am certainly not left wing, and I am not a dupe," he told Stephan Leshner. "... I am aware of this new theory that Tet was a disaster for the Communists. I went to Vietnam first in 1953. I know Asia extremely well. I would not [disagree] for a minute that the United States armed forces responded very effectively in terrible circumstances in the Tet offensive. But to say that this was somehow an American *cum* South Vietnamese victory that the press concealed, I think is arrant nonsense."

Poor Reasoner, concludes Leshner in his trenchant new book, *Media Unbound*.^{*} Reasoner suffers from "a classic case of mediaization," which Leshner defines as "the disturbing process by which journalism befores memory and truth." Mediaization began, Leshner insists, with the American press coverage of the Tet attack in 1968 by the Vietcong and North Vietnamese. And for those like Reasoner, there may be no cure. "While characterizing as some 'new theory' the strikingly similar findings

on Tet by a diverse group of historians, Reasoner ascribes unassailable truth to contemporary reportage of those events," Leshner says.

But there is good news: if not for Reasoner, at least for others, the fog is lifting on Vietnam mediaization. And not just on the subject of the Tet offensive, which is now generally

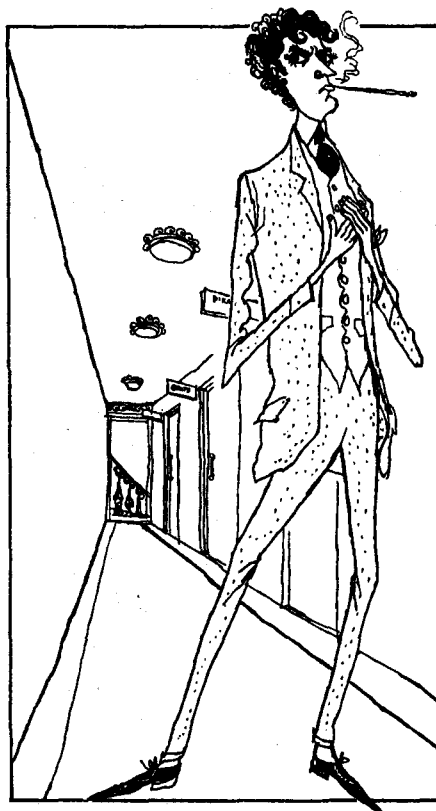
regarded as having been reported with breathtaking inaccuracy and misplaced emphasis. Rather, the quality of the coverage of the entire war itself has now become a matter of intense debate. The discussion, in fact, has already come so far that often the issue is not whether the American coverage was good or bad, but just how bad it really was and what resulted from it.

That, for instance, was the crux of the argument recently between Robert Elegant, the novelist and former Asian correspondent for the *Los Angeles Times*, and Peter Braestrup, who reported from Vietnam for the *New York Times* and *Washington Post* and has written a devastating critique, *Big Story*, of the press treatment of the Tet offensive. Elegant touched off the argument with his 1981 article in *Encounter* that unhesitatingly blamed the press for the American and South Vietnamese defeat. "Never before Vietnam had the collective policy of the media—no less stringent term will serve—sought by graphic and unremitting distortion the victory of the enemies of the correspondents' own side," Elegant wrote.

The American press, he said, "somehow felt obliged to be less objective than partisan, to take sides,

for it was inspired by the *engagé* 'investigative' reporting that burgeoned in the U.S. in these impassioned years. The press was instinctively 'agin the Government'—and, at least reflexively, for Saigon's enemies." And press hostility endured after American troops began to withdraw. "Political pressures built up by the media had made it quite impossible for Washington to maintain even the minimum material and moral support that would have enabled the Saigon regime to continue effective resistance," he wrote. In short, "for the first time in modern history, the outcome of a war was determined not on the battlefield, but on the printed page and, above all, on the television screen."

Braestrup, now the editor of the *Wilson Quarterly*, conceded that there were "gaping holes and changing fads" in the coverage of the war. "As Elegant states, many of the American newsmen in Vietnam—and their bosses at home—were singularly unprepared to cope with the complexities of the long, ever-changing Indo-China experience," Braestrup wrote. But "there was no consistent bias in the Saigon reporting... During my years in Vietnam, I found few reporters who, even as they criticized allied performance (or, more often, quarrelled with U.S.



^{*}Houghton-Mifflin, \$13.95.

Fred Barnes is National Political Reporter for the Baltimore Sun.

officialdom), saw the Vietnamese Communists, however impressive as fighters, as the 'good guys.' Such sentiments were strong only among Western pundits and academics far from the scene."

On the larger matter of blaming the press for the defeat, Braestrup also demurred. "This is a strong claim," he wrote. "It echoes the past claims of some champions of network television, who argue that CBS, NBC and ABC brought the realities of the war into the living room, and thereby turned America against it. Yet, there is no empirical evidence that shows any firm link between media coverage and trends in public opinion . . . In my view, much of the confusion in the press at home stemmed from chronic confusion in Washington. Lyndon Johnson refused to design or support a decisive strategy for winning the war. Peace, not victory, became his goal. This ambiguity led to 'credibility gaps,' policy contradictions, and easy opportunities for LBJ's foes."

Don't get Braestrup's role in this debate wrong, though. More than anyone else, he is responsible for the reassessment of the performance by the press in Vietnam. In 1978, *Big Story* was published in two volumes, a rigorous and irrefutable examination of how the American press—newspapers, wires, newsmagazines, TV networks—misreported the Tet offensive. Since then, it has assumed a place as one of the most celebrated critiques of the press ever, and now it has been published in a one volume, abridged edition.†

Braestrup characterizes the message conveyed by American reporters during the Tet attack as "Disaster in Vietnam." Rarely, he writes, "has contemporary crisis-journalism turned out, in retrospective, to have veered so widely from reality. Essentially, the dominant themes of the words and film from Vietnam (re-broadcast in commentary, editorials, and much political rhetoric at home) added up to a portrait of defeat for the allies. Historians, on the contrary, have concluded that the Tet offensive resulted in a severe military-political setback for Hanoi in the South. To have portrayed such a setback for one side as a defeat for the other—in a major crisis abroad—cannot be counted as a triumph for American journalism."

It takes Braestrup 600 pages, in the abridged version, to recount all the press blunders, inaccuracies, and distortions. At the start of the

offensive, he notes, it was wrongly reported that the supposedly impregnable American embassy in Saigon had been penetrated by Vietcong: it hadn't been, but the correction was slow to catch up with the story. Then, "American newsmen were quick to award Hanoi a major 'psychological' triumph here, if only because they—the newsmen—and Lyndon B. Johnson had been taken by surprise.

It was a portent of journalistic reactions to come."

Next, reporters decided incorrectly that the offensive was a psychological downer for the Vietnamese citizenry and had given the Vietcong the "initiative" on the battlefield. Statements to the contrary by American officials were ignored or downplayed. Among the most egregious media offenders was Walter Cronkite of

CBS, who concluded after one week in South Vietnam that the "real meaning" of the Tet attack was that discord would deepen in Saigon and the war would be prolonged. Two weeks after that, Cronkite declared the offensive a victory for the Vietcong and concluded that "the only rational way out" was negotiations.

(continued on page 37)

AT LAST, A JOURNAL OF OPINION THAT'S DECIDEDLY NON-LIBERAL

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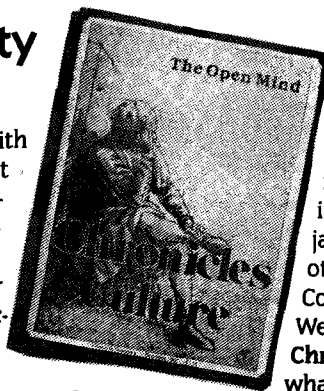
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T838

†Yale University Press, \$25/\$9.95 paper.

Stanley Rothman and S. Robert Lichter, authors of some of the most imaginative and important public-opinion studies undertaken in recent years, have made an ambitious effort to analyze the etiology of the student upheavals of the 1960s.

The authors do a superb job in demolishing the series of studies that portrayed the radical students as "the best and the brightest" of their generation. Virtually hundreds of studies, employing survey and psychological techniques, supposedly proved, as Rothman and Lichter note, "that radical students were democratic rather than authoritarian, humanitarian and humanistic rather than pragmatic and self-interested, and generally psychologically healthy and morally advanced." Rothman and Lichter show that the instruments and research methods which produced the data were contaminated by the socio-political perspective of liberal social science.

The questionnaires were constructed in such a manner as to ascribe praiseworthy attributes to radical students almost by definition. For example, belief in civil liberties was generally tested by asking about the rights of atheists, Communists, homosexuals, and others whose rights have been favored by the Left. The students were rarely asked about the rights of fascists, racists, or others, although it is in such cases that their tolerance for deviance would have been better tested. (Lichter and Rothman note that even positive responses to questions on tolerance for right-wing groups do not seem to have reflected deep-seated commitments or to have been predictive of behavior. Belief in civil liberties did not hinder many New Leftists from interfering with the speech of people they disagreed with or disrupting the classes of professors whose opinions they disliked. They note that at Harvard in 1971 New Leftists shouted down a group of students who tried to organize a pro-Administration Vietnam policy teach-in, explaining the right to free speech included the right to shout people down.)

Sometimes studies supposedly measuring personality actually

Erich Isaac is Professor of Geography at the City College of New York. Rael Jean Isaac is author, most recently, of Party and Politics in Israel (Longman).

**ROOTS OF RADICALISM:
JEW, CHRISTIAN, AND THE NEW LEFT**
Stanley Rothman and S. Robert Lichter / Oxford University Press / \$27.95

Erich Isaac and Rael Jean Isaac

measured political opinions. A study by Richard Flacks, one of the many New Left founders-turned-social-science-professors, characterized radical activists as "humanitarian." Flacks defined this attribute as "a concern with the plight of others in society; a desire to help others—value on compassion and sympathy—desire to alleviate suffering." The definition of radicals as "humanitarian" seemed therefore to refer to a personality trait. But the questions designed to tap this trait asked students to agree or disagree with such statements as "I intend to dedicate myself to doing something about eliminating poverty and inequality." Those who answered "with an affirmation of their desire to help the 'poor' and the 'weak' were scored for humanitarianism." As Rothman and Lichter point out, "The scale was so constructed that radicals would emerge as humanitarians by definition, given their overt ideological leanings."

The students, moreover, many of them from upper-middle-class backgrounds, knew the "right" answers even to less obvious questions. Student radicals were the ideological children—sometimes actually the biological offspring—of those who studied them. Everett Ladd and Seymour Martin Lipset in a 1968 study found that 50 percent of social and clinical psychologists with children of college age reported that their children had participated in campus demonstrations.

The authors are unsparing in their criticism of the work of such influential students of the New Left as Kenneth Keniston, Lawrence Kohlberg, and Haan, Block, and Smith. The widely quoted work of Kenneth Keniston was based on interviews with only 14 people, with whom he admitted he strongly sympathized. Rothman and Lichter point out that while the Kohlberg scoring system was widely praised on the ground that moral reasoning scores were

derived not from the substance of the individual's conclusions but from the structure of his moral argumentation, in fact what Kohlberg did was to transform ideological stances into psychological categories. In short, the authors show that the so-called scientific studies that established the public's image of student radicals treated left-wing political beliefs as manifestations of psychological health.

Rothman and Lichter also point out that the studies of New Left activists have failed to emphasize an obvious fact: the students were mostly Jews. Comparisons of radical and nonradical youth were thus to a considerable extent unintentionally comparisons of Jewish and non-Jewish family styles. In attempting to explain why Jewish families produced the American New Left, the authors provide an informative survey of the factors leading the Old Left to exercise an enormous attraction for East European Jews in particular. They treat historical marginality as the single most important factor in explaining the prominent role Jews have taken in radical movements, although they point out that once established Jewish radicalism is perpetuated by straightforward parental socialization.

Up to this point the book has internal consistency. A brief but lucid history of the rise and decline of the student Left has been followed by an analysis of the defects in the conventional social-scientific wisdom on the New Left. The hitherto insufficiently noted role of Jews has been convincingly documented, with explanations for the phenomenon sought in the social and cultural experience of Jews, especially in Eastern Europe. We are on page 145 of a 400-page book.

Since the New Left was not wholly Jewish even at the outset—roughly 30 percent of the initial group seem to have been Protestant—and became progressively less Jewish over time, the authors might have gone on to examine the social-psychological and historical factors that explain why Protestants and Catholics from the Midwest and South took over the leadership role and stamped quite a different character upon the radical student movement.

Rothman and Lichter do not do this. Instead they embark on a new kind of study. And while they have



been devastating critics of the hidden and unproven assumptions in studies by social scientists, they proceed to wrap themselves, without apology, in psychoanalytical mythology. From marginality we move to narcissism, from political socialization to Freudian stages of development. We are told that the fantasy productions of radicals are oriented toward phallic-assertive modes of relating to their environment, and away from genital-integrative modalities that should characterize mature individuals.

The authors' basic thesis in this part of the book is that left-wing radicals are "inverse authoritarians." These differ from Adorno's traditional authoritarian, who deflects his hidden hostilities onto outgroups, in that they unleash their anger directly against the powers that be, and take the side of the world's outgroups. Inverse authoritarians, according to the authors, are of two types. The first are "rigid" rebels, whose "power strategy is predominantly sadistic rather than masochistic," who established "negative identities" during adolescence and are "driven by a highly punitive superego." The second, "protean" rebels, are ambivalent toward power and have narcissistic impatience with boundaries that fence the individual off from the full range of experience to which he feels himself entitled. Rigid rebels are prone to "ego diffusion," the attempt to override boundaries between self and other, rather than to maintain them.

Even if this analysis described the psychodynamics of the subjects studied (James Billington in his study of the origins of revolutionary faith, *Fire in the Minds of Men*, observes that Freudian analysis seems "more appropriate for the period of the historian than for the historical period"), it would be of little benefit. The authors themselves reveal that personality traits do not correlate with political ideologies. They write: "The same set of personal conflicts can give rise to either a fervent espousal or rejection of the establishment." But if that is the case, if staunch defenders and determined subverters of the status quo can be produced as a result of the same set of psychological factors, of what use is this type of analysis? What is more, the exhaustive (and exhausting) studies undertaken by Rothman and Lichter do not even show that political radicals, whether Jewish or non-Jewish, are predominantly "inverse authoritarians." The authors note:

To be sure, most student radicals were

not authoritarians, or, at least, their authoritarianism was not captured by our instruments. All we can say is that we found a larger number of authoritarians among the student radicals than we did in our comparison groups. We believe that these young people exercised an influence far beyond their numbers, but our study does not enable us to explain why many young people, who did not differ from conservatives or liberals in any way that we could measure, chose a different political path.

Rothman and Lichter offer no evidence that those who scored on their tests as "inverse authoritarians" were more influential in the New Left than those who did not: this is simply an article of faith. And of course, even if all the political radicals had scored as inverse authoritarians on these projective tests, what the authors identify as the central problem would not have been addressed: "to determine why at one period, rather than another, a particular combination of . . . ideas moved from the margins of society to the center of political controversy."

In the end we are left with a frustrating book. What the authors feel they have accomplished remains unclear. Why do we have these hundreds of pages that summarize the results of psychoanalytical tests administered to Jewish New Left, non-Jewish New Left, and traditional (non-New Left) subjects? One possibility is that the authors, having exposed the shoddiness of earlier research, set out to show that their rejection of that work is not based on their own political beliefs or on denial of the core psychoanalytical assumptions of earlier research, but is based rather on the way in which that research was carried out. Rothman and Lichter might be arguing that (a) you have abused your own methods; (b) we will demonstrate for you the correct way to use these methods; and (c) the method, however, is not useful in throwing light on the essential problem, which is why a particular radical movement emerged at a given historical moment. The advantage of such a strategy is that the powerful psychoanalytical contingent in the social sciences, which would have reflexively closed ranks against a purely historical or cultural analysis, might be won over or at least neutralized, particularly if (c) only emerged once (a) and (b) were fully demonstrated.

But is this what Rothman and Lichter have set out to do? Remarkably, these normally rigorous critics of untested assumptions clearly seem to accept psychoanalytic dogmas. They are more equivocal when it

comes to the usefulness of the techniques they employ in casting light on what they rightly consider the central problem. The authors waver and the reader is at a loss to ascertain what Rothman and Lichter themselves think of the value of their psychoanalytic exercise as a tool in laying bare the roots of radicalism. Readers thus might bear in mind the observation of James Billington on an earlier breed of young radicals.

[T]he fact is that most of the important early revolutionaries seem surprisingly free of unusual personal characteristics. One of the best studies of the original French revolutionaries points out that "the future revolutionaries were almost all docile pupils of Jesuits and Oratorians." Like most other French children of their time, they were fond of their mothers, of their native regions, and of mildly sentimental, apolitical literature.

Rothman and Lichter are pessimistic. They rightly point out that campuses have not been restored to what they were before "the revolution." They have become bastions of left-liberal and radical social criticism. They note that the institutionalization of more radical attitudes on college campuses was facilitated by an influx of radical academics into social science and humanities departments and that this professoriate

continues to nourish critical tendencies among college youth who are far more skeptical than they used to be about the traditional values of their society. Indeed, Rothman and Lichter might have noted that the "quiet" on campuses conceals the subversion of the academic enterprise that has continued unchecked. Traditional and vital academic subjects have been discontinued while political or ideological operations in various guises and forms have been grafted onto the academy. Within the professoriate, ideals of scholarship have been abandoned by committed Marxists. So bad has the situation become in some areas that Latin American Studies Association President Jorge Dominguez in the Summer 1982 issue of the Association's Newsletter referred to academic leftists who "are tolerated passively

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by other members who disagree with those views, but who are cowed into passivity and thus become irresponsible partners in the subversion of the standards of what claims to be a learned society." As David Asman notes in a Heritage Foundation study, academic freedom is subverted into "academic terrorism."

The situation is worse in some other democratic countries, especially in West Germany to which Rothman and Lichter devote a chapter. Ironically a student movement without a Jewish component was able to capitalize on the guilt felt by educators and public alike for the

capitulation of the universities to the Nazis in the thirties to force the capitulation of their elders to a new set of totalitarian enemies of the academy.

The New Left's influence has extended far beyond the university. The student movement succeeded in moving the entire framework of political debate sharply to the left. The New Class, the middle-class elite which includes the symbol-wielding segment of society, not merely the professors but the salaried professionals, the communicators, much of the government bureaucracy, has become part of the adversary culture, so that, as Irving Kristol has pointed out, that class can virtually be defined in terms of a "distinctive set of anti-capitalist and I would argue anti-democratic ideals and cultural values." While this is not wholly the result of the influence of the New Left—the adversary culture has deep roots in the intellectual culture—that movement certainly had a major impact in making the college-educated resonate to the critique of the adversary culture.

There have been setbacks, notably the defeat of Jimmy Carter, who had installed New Left leaders at the head of some government bureaucracies and moved them into important positions in many more. From their bureaucratic strongholds they had financed "Movement" organizations around the country. But as Rothman and Lichter rightly observe, the change in government has not produced a major change in underlying attitudes. To be sure, not all students of revolutionary movements are as pessimistic as Rothman and Lichter. Billington, a student of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century radicalism, writes:

I am . . . disposed to wonder if this secular creed [faith in revolution as the "sunrise of a perfect society"] . . . might not ultimately prove to be only a stage in the continuing metamorphosis of older forms of faith and to speculate that the belief in secular revolution which has legitimized so much authoritarianism in the twentieth century, might dialectically prefigure some rediscovery of religious evolution to revalidate democracy in the twenty-first.

It would be encouraging to think so. But while Billington may be right that the secular faith in revolution may give rise to a new form of faith, it may not be a faith which informs and revalidates democracy. In closing, Rothman and Lichter insist that the "burden of proof lies heavily with the optimists among us." Given existing trends, it is hard to fault their conclusion. □

ROBERT LOWELL: A BIOGRAPHY

Ian Hamilton / Random House / \$17.95

Robert Leiter

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This would appear to be the season for discussing the madness of poets. Beginning with the appearance of Eileen Simpson's *Poets in Their Youth*, a memoir of her strenuous marriage to John Berryman, and followed over the course of many months by the publications of Sylvia Plath's journals, John Haffenden's life of Berryman, and now nearly six-hundred pages about Robert Lowell—considered by many to be the poet of his generation—the subject of poets and madness has been widely and hotly debated.

The source of Lowell's madness is not a subject actively pursued anywhere in Ian Hamilton's exhaustive

Robert Leiter has written for the *New Republic*, *Commonweal*, *the American Scholar*, and other journals.

study, though the author, a poet and editor himself, as well as an intimate of Lowell's, has amassed an abundance of evidence that points us in the right direction.

Forces would seem to have conspired against Lowell long before his birth. On paper the marriage of his parents, Charlotte Winslow and Robert Traill Spence Lowell, prominent names in Boston society, looked "spectacularly correct." The match apparently gave great pleasure to Charlotte's father. It was said of Arthur Winslow that "he espoused a brand of New England integrity that even hard-line Bostonians considered somewhat over-rhetorical and Prussian." He was not looking to be replaced "as the dominant figure in his favorite daughter's life. Nor was Charlotte herself in need of any extra restraints upon her own natural bossiness. She had a man she worshipped; now she wanted one who would unquestionably worship her. For both father and daughter, [Bob Lowell's] combination of weak character and strong lineage was indeed perfectly correct." With this in mind, Charlotte and Arthur were also willing to overlook the fact that Bob was from the poor (meaning only comfortably off) branch of the Lowells, where "priests and poets figured prominently among [the] immediate forbears."

The elder Robert Lowell, a Naval officer, hadn't much of a chance either as husband or later as father. All of Charlotte's notions of military glamor were invested in Arthur, whom she saw as "a Prussian, tidied-up version of Napoleon." Six years before her marriage, Charlotte had read the *Duchesse d'Abrantes's*

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Memoirs of Napoleon and had fallen for "the conqueror's majestic slovenliness." For a time she slept on an army cot, took cold swims in the morning, bolted her food, and even began calling her father "Napoleon."

Charlotte was expert at "the haughty bon mot, the glacial put-down." She never stopped playing "the fearfully important game of keeping the world guessing what was on her mind." It was not a game that gave her much pleasure, but then, as Hamilton makes clear, "pleasure wasn't one of her favorite pursuits."

Once married Charlotte became an even more awesome shrew. She would chastise her husband, then turn to her son (and only child) and say, "Oh, Bobby, it's such a comfort to have a man in the house." The eight-year-old Lowell would answer, "I am not a man. I am a boy," and was left to wonder why his father never fought back.

Lowell considered his mother an adversary, a "scolding, rusty hinge." And yet he could not deny that he was also "utterly enthralled" by her . . . "even to make small inroads on her appalling power would be to achieve victories that seemed quite beyond his father's wit or inclination. From a tender age, Lowell became a keen student of enslavement. And from his father he learned that decency and good intentions can be abject."

Lowell also knew of his mother's one great weakness—her "nerves," which contributed to her "apparently unappeasable discontent." Nothing in Charlotte's life was ever as it should have been.

Lowell's performance at school was perfectly in keeping with the pattern set in childhood. He was a below-average student who got high marks for fighting back. (His letters from the period are filled with misspellings, which leads Hamilton to suggest that there may have been a hint of dyslexia.) Never one "to flaunt much boyish charm," Lowell was remembered as "dark, menacing, and belligerent," and always "bigger, stronger, and shaggier than his contemporaries." Marked as "a wild man," he was forever "ready to take his unpopularity for granted." At school he was given the nickname Cal. Some said it came from Caliban, a part he acted in a student production of *The Tempest*; others said it came from Caligula, the mad Roman emperor Lowell emulated.

In his fourth term at St. Mark's School Lowell made two important allies, Frank Parker and Blair Clark, who considered themselves half intellectuals, half rebels. Another signifi-

cant influence was Richard Eberhart, the poet, who was a master at St. Mark's, and the first "real" writer Lowell came to know. Under their tutelage Lowell soon understood that literature—especially poetry—could be used to wear away at his mother's power.

Even before Lowell had left St. Mark's, Charlotte had consulted with the Boston psychiatrist/poet Merrill

Moore, who was a fringe member of the Southern "Fugitive" group of writers led by John Crowe Ransom and Allen Tate. Charlotte was seeing Moore about her "nerves" and "had left [him] in little doubt that her mental balance depended largely on the balance of her errant son."

So began Charlotte's campaign to "tidy up" her no longer small Napoleon. Her efforts were intensi-

fied as matters became "more self-evidently hopeless." By this time she had decided that poetry was a source of "overexcitement" and was to be warned against.

The Lowells insisted that their son attend Harvard in the hope that they could cure him of his addiction to writing. But after a rather brief and lackluster stay at the college, Lowell, with the assistance of Merrill Moore,

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The Institute, in association with the Liberty Fund, has scheduled three conferences thus far for the first half of 1983.

The Institute's 1983 summer residential research seminar, "Political Power and Economic Perspectives," will be held from June 13 to August 21 in Menlo Park, California. Inquiries from interested scholars should be addressed to Leonard P. Liggio, President, IHS.

On April 21-23, Professor Joseph Peden (Baruch College, CUNY) will moderate a colloquium, "The Legal, Ethical, and Psychiatric Conceptions of Responsibility," in Half Moon Bay, California.

The late Felix Morley provides the inspiration for the colloquium, "The Liberty and Responsibility of the Press," to be led by IHS President Leonard P. Liggio, on May 12-14 in Gibson Island, Maryland.

Publications

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went south to pursue "his poetic apprenticeship." Hamilton describes him as "a fugitive from the victorious North seeking refuge with the Fugitives." Lowell looked to Allen Tate and John Crowe Ransom as his mentors (and surrogate fathers) and eventually followed Ransom to Kenyon College.

During this same period Lowell met the writer Jean Stafford, who was to become the first of his three wives. Their relationship would appear to have been doomed from the start. During the Christmas holidays of 1938, while driving with Stafford in his parents' car, Lowell crashed into a wall at the end of a Cambridge cul-de-sac. Stafford's nose was badly crushed and she spent months in the hospital. (Bits of bone had to be picked out near her brain and, in the words of Blair Clark, "There was about a 25 percent reduction in the aesthetic value of her face.") Lowell was fined seventy-five dollars in Cambridge District Court. The incident caused something of a scandal and was, in his parents' opinion, further proof of their son's instability.

Lowell returned to Kenyon in January 1939. He was seriously considering leaving college to marry Stafford. Not only did he feel an obligation to her (she was still in the hospital), but he also knew that his parents strongly disapproved of the match. Jean came from Colorado and was "therefore" impossibly non-smart.

To prove once again the grandeur of his defiance, Lowell married Stafford in April 1940 in New York City. And yet, according to Hamilton, despite Lowell's rebelliousness, his old New England sensibility continued to crave order—rules and tests. Hamilton points to the early formal poems and to Lowell's eventual conversion to Catholicism as confirmation of this.

The Lowell marriage went into swift decline, however, as Cal's interest in religion grew more fervid. Lowell became dictatorial about every inch of the couple's domestic and intellectual life. Reading matter was screened for its seriousness—"no newspapers, and no novels except Dostoevsky, Proust, James and Tolstoy." Food was similarly scrutinized. Stafford began drinking

heavily and also began falling victim to a series of minor illnesses. Quarrels increased, and one evening, in a rage, Lowell punched Stafford in the face and broke her nose again.

The trouble all along, Stafford contended, was that Lowell, with his "powerful alchemy," had turned her into a version of his mother and that "subconsciously she had accepted the role until she terrifyingly resembled her." Stafford had also come to confuse Cal with her dominating father, thereby completing the vicious circle.

The Lowells finally separated after Cal began seeing Delmore Schwartz's former wife, Gertrude Buckman. Here we see the first indications of a pattern which was to continue throughout Lowell's two subsequent marriages (to the writers Elizabeth Hardwick and Lady Caroline Blackwood) and his very public career as a poet: a woman would come into Lowell's life and he would proclaim that, through her, a new life was beginning for him. His behavior would become erratic; he would stay up all night drinking and talking. He would threaten friends and relatives with violence, call for a divorce from his present wife, and begin extolling the virtues of dictators like Hitler. After a time the police would have to be called, and Lowell would be taken to an institution.

During his first breakdown, while being subdued by police, Lowell repeatedly shouted, "cut off my testicles!" (He had also spent time racing through the streets ranting about devils and homosexuals.) It was Merrill Moore's opinion that Lowell was having considerable conflict between religion and sexuality; and it was Lowell's opinion that his mother wanted to keep him locked up for the rest of his life.

Allen Tate believed that, after Lowell's first breakdown, Charlotte would at last be satisfied. In a letter to Merrill Moore he wrote:

Cal gave up Jean, he has given up the Church . . . and he has given up poetry. I don't know whether he told you that he left the manuscript of his unfinished poem . . . in the hands of a virtual stranger. I am told that everything that paranoics do is symbolic action, and an objectivization of the delusion. In giving up these three things Cal has given up the three defenses against disintegration: but his mother will feel that he has given up all those wicked influences.

According to Hamilton, in the original draft of "91 Revere Street," an autobiographical prose essay which became part of the poetry collection *Life Studies*, the tone in

which Lowell remembered himself when "mad" is consistent with the tone he used "to recall childhood misdeeds."

The madness and the poetry kept pace with one another throughout Lowell's career; and the madness may even have come to influence Lowell's ideas about the behavior of the modern poet. In a letter to John Berryman, who was himself in the hospital suffering from exhaustion, Lowell wrote:

I am back from Greensboro, where Randall and [I] enjoyed [?] ourselves lamenting the times. It seems there's been something curious twisted and against the grain about the world poets of our generation have had to live in. What troubles you and I, Ted Roethke, Elizabeth Bishop, Delmore, Randall—even Karl Shapiro—have had. I hope your exhaustion [sic] is nothing very drastic; these knocks are almost proof of intelligence and valor in us.

Lowell would appear to be making more of the madness than of the poetry; or, as many commentators

have done, making equal claims for both.

But Hamilton's book is a refutation of the supposed link between neurosis and creativity. Lowell's life would appear to be about the consequences of suggestibility, especially the suggestibility born of psychiatry. Charlotte Lowell believed what she was told about her difficult son (whose difficulty was, of course, of her making), conveyed this to her child, and then the child lived up to her expectations. Somehow poetry became part of the whole, dreadful process.

Clearly the poetry had little to do with Lowell's countless breakdowns. (And some might argue that the madness robbed the poetry of its early greatness.) As Hamilton's book repeatedly demonstrates, Lowell was fortunate in having people who stayed by him. They were the ones who cleared a space for him where, in his lucid moments, he could create something that will live on beyond the legacy of his madness. □

STRAIGHT TALK ABOUT AMERICAN EDUCATION

Theodore M. Black / Harcourt Brace Jovanovich / \$14.95

COMPELLING BELIEF: THE CULTURE OF AMERICAN SCHOOLING

Stephen Arons / McGraw-Hill / \$19.95

Chester E. Finn, Jr.

Though too many American schools remain sorry excuses for educational institutions, the notion that something must be done about this is finally beginning to make its way into the political, cultural, and intellectual mainstream. No longer are thoughtful criticisms confined to the seasonal reflections of reactionary columnists, the boozy lamentations of aging academic traditionalists, and the gatherings of such oppositional groups as the Council for Basic Education. To be sure, the elementary/secondary school establishment remains largely oblivious of—or defensive about—the palpable shortcomings of our public schools, and we have a long way to go before the pronouncements of the National Education Association and its ilk come to echo the everyday observations of parents and employers, if indeed they ever do. But, *mirabile*

dictu, a lengthening list of governors, legislators, mainline editorial writers, foundation executives, and even a few farsighted association chiefs is no longer drawing its counsel on education issues from the conventional folly of the sixties. Rather, they are taking their signals from impatient constituents, from direct observation, from common sense, and from the solid writings of responsible critics, some of which are even beginning to be issued by major commercial publishers—a welcome signal, perhaps, that solidity may now be marketable.*

Two such volumes are the latest works of Theodore Black and Stephen Arons, which have somewhat more in common than appearances would suggest. Black is an educational layman, a business executive in late middle age, who has penned what amounts to an anthology of astute observations and sane insights garnered through long service as a member (and for five years "chancellor" or chairman) of the New York

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Board of Regents, the nation's oldest, most comprehensive, and most powerful state "board of education." Arons is a youngish attorney on the faculty of the University of Massachusetts, where he writes prolifically about legal, educational, and constitutional issues.

Compelling Belief is in fact a compelling book of heresy. Arons explores the "suppression of intellectual freedom" that results from universal compulsory public schooling, chronicles the efforts by some parents (and a handful of educators) to break the mold, and sketches the Constitutional bases upon which he believes those efforts legitimately rest. Deploying an inventive and rather generous construction of the First Amendment that owes much to Alexander Meiklejohn and a bit to Justice Douglas, Arons boldly asserts that "the present political and financial structure of American schooling is unconstitutional." This arresting conclusion follows from his view that the Bill of Rights protects both the expression and the *formation* of belief and opinion, that schooling is the major influence—besides the family itself—on a child's beliefs, values, and opinions, and that government control of schooling therefore constrains intellectual freedom, political diversity, and individual dignity. The remedy, Arons argues, is to effect a "separation of school and state" by ending the hegemony of government-related education and by substituting a system wherein the state is "neutral" as to what is taught and even-handed in apportioning the financial resources for such schooling. Though he does not insist that "public" schools be scrapped, he would have private schooling of every sort be free from nearly all government regulation and financed in such a way as to be accessible to poor and rich alike. He stops short of offering any particular scheme, but is clearly headed toward some sort of voucher system.

*Other worthy new volumes include Gene I. Maeroff, *Don't Blame the Kids: The Trouble with America's Public Schools* (McGraw-Hill, 1982); Robert Benjamin, *Making Schools Work* (Continuum, 1981); Samuel L. Blumenfeld, *Is Public Education Necessary?* (Devin-Adair, 1981); Michael E. Manley-Casimir, editor, *Family Choice in Schooling* (Lexington, 1982); Robert B. Everhard, editor, *The Public School Monopoly* (Pacific Institute for Public Policy Research, 1982); David S. Seeley, *Education Through Partnership* (American Enterprise Institute, 1981); Mortimer Adler et. al., *The Paideia Proposal* (Macmillan, 1982); and the forthcoming works by Diane Ravitch (Basic Books) and Gilbert Sewall (Macmillan).

The problem here is that Arons is trying to harness both libertarian instincts and liberal impulses to the same policy cart. He is much taken with the plight of educational dissidents: the parent who prefers to teach his child at home, the Protestant fundamentalist preacher-educator whose world is based on faith rather than science, the rural sectarians who choose to rear their youngsters in an atmosphere of piety, stern morality, and meticulous avoidance of worldly "progress" and technocracy. Arons correctly observes that it is virtually impossible to accommodate their conceptions of schooling within a framework of majoritarian "public" education and state regulation, and that efforts to do so invite factional strife, endless litigation, and controversy over everything from the choice of books for the school library to the credentials of "qualified" teachers. But where some would simply attach a safety valve that would ease these pressures by allowing the dissident to escape from the strictures of state-dominated schooling, Arons's libertarian inclinations lead him to construe education itself as fundamentally a private act, an extension of the family, a responsibility of the parent, and to suggest that a vibrant, free, and diverse society must make it possible for all to raise their children as they think best.

So far, so good. But trouble lurks just ahead. For the liberal in Arons cannot abide the possibility that society might tolerate schools that practice racial discrimination in any manifestation, a laudable instinct but one that leads him to urge public regulation of that aspect of schooling. The governmental foot thus creeps back through the schoolhouse door, to be followed by a whole leg as Arons urges redistribution of economic resources to enable low-income families to realize their educational dreams. That, too, is a decent impulse, one shared by many longtime advocates of public aid to private education. The difficulty is that such aid, no matter how it may be supplied, will come under some kind of public control. In any event, that has been our experience in health, welfare, housing, higher education, and every other policy domain in which a benevolent society has attempted to improve the choices available to those without sufficient private resources. That this will be true of schooling, too, is already evident from the enormous brouhaha surrounding the terms on which private schools share in a public "benefit" so routine and innocuous that many do not even call it "aid,"

namely tax deductions for their donors and exemption from taxation on their own revenues.

If further proof were needed, it was supplied in rich and varied detail during the Senate Finance Committee's "mark up" last autumn of the tuition tax-credit bill that President Reagan proposed, when a very modest level of aid to the parents of private-school students was weighted down with many of the same restrictions, regulations, and prohibitions that already burden the public schools. One need not be a Washington-weary cynic to predict that all the rest would be added in due course. The inexorable result would be the erosion of the distinctiveness and diversity of private education—the very qualities that make it attractive to parents, and perhaps worthy of aid, in the first place. That is why a number of mainstream private-school groups, such as the National Association of Independent Schools, are having second thoughts about tuition tax-credits, and why many fundamentalist educators have already decided they would rather be free than prosperous.

Ted Black's knowing pragmatism contrasts with Arons's libertarian-utopianism, though not in every particular. Black agrees that the future well-being of the Republic depends in part on acceptance of the principle of educational choice. He favors public aid to private education

and would try tuition tax credits and vouchers (yes, both). He believes, with Arons, that the Supreme Court has egregiously distorted the First Amendment. But Black is an old-fashioned liberal who believes that education cannot be left entirely to the marketplace, and that school administrators cannot be wholly trusted in matters of quality control. Though he judges competition to be conducive to quality, "If we are to enjoy educational pluralism, we must be assured of high quality in all of the educational systems which make up the pluralistic whole. If we permit children to receive their formal education in schools which, by default, we allow to be inferior and of poor quality, we do a disservice to the national interest as well as to the children themselves." Furthermore, Black implies, we do not serve the long-term interests of private schooling itself if we wink at educational malpractice, encourage schools that cater to bizarre tastes, and invite allegations of fraud and chicanery.

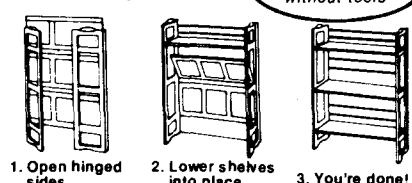
There is, of course, no easy solution; one person's notion of what is flaky and unacceptable in the classroom may be another's pedagogical Nirvana. But Black comes down squarely on the side of reasonable standard-setting and oversight by government, preferably at the state level, in such matters as school certification, teacher competency, and student achievement. He would not give government an educational monopoly (though he is proud of

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having sent his own children to public schools) but suggests that one sure antidote to educational statism is public confidence that all schools, under whatever auspices, abide by generally accepted norms and expectations, at least in the core of their educational programs.

Black does not dwell overlong on the specialized anxieties of the true educational dissident. The private-school image that looms largest in his mind's eye is the long-established Catholic parochial system. This is natural, for Catholic schools remain much the largest segment within private education; they are particularly numerous in New York; and they have, over the years, found it relatively easy to function within a public-policy framework of limited oversight and (even more limited) aid. Not at all coincidentally, they are also the sector of private education that most ardently seeks additional public aid, preferably through tuition tax credits, and that foresees little difficulty enduring whatever strings may be attached.

Ted Black's educational world is an improved version of the one that most people inhabit. It is a world in which public and private schools coexist, in which the societal interest in education is tamed but not broken by the familial interest, in which the state retains authority to require children to attend school (and the responsibility for providing the wherewithal of schooling) but exercises that

authority with a light touch. It is a world of plain speaking and common sense, largely devoid of education jargon, interest-group politics, and funny ideas. It is a world that knows the difference between non-discrimination and quotas. That prizes educational quality and has scant patience with the excesses wrought in the name of equity. That understands why parents want their children to learn values in school, and which values they want them to learn. That appreciates the dependency-inducing and homogenizing effects of extensive federal intrusion into schooling. That takes as given the necessity of testing youngsters in order to see what they have learned. And that concedes such sensitive matters as sex-education their rightful place in the schoolhouse, but insists that they be approached with delicacy and without compulsion. It is, in short, an educational world that would instantly strike the vast majority of parents and students—and, I judge, the majority of teachers, though not their national spokesmen—as sane, reasonable, and appealing.

Why, then, is it so different from the never-never-land found in most teachers' colleges, education journals, and the actual policies and practices of many school systems? In part, one must ruefully conclude, because sensible people do not rule many precincts of that land, and a number of those who started sensibly have been bullied, cajoled, and confused into silliness, excess, and extremism. In part because the freshening interest in education by governors and legislators and other elected laymen has not yet assumed gale force. In part because special pleading by interest groups within and around education—including a few of the less noble dissidents whose part Stephen Arons takes—have tended to focus our interests and energies on volatile marginal issues rather than on the core of the educational process. And in part because, until quite recently, one would not be likely to find NBC, *Newsweek*, or a major commercial publisher such as Harcourt Brace Jovanovich giving the time of day to "straight talk" about education.

But such straight talk is now slowly displacing the twisted discourse of recent years. Education is gradually moving into the center of the political arena. This carries risks—some of them already manifest in the clumsy, even simplistic, efforts by a few states to improve teacher and student quality through mandate, fiat, and regulation—but it also has enormous

potential for good. Provided we can avoid politicizing the curriculum itself, which means resisting the vigorous efforts of the NEA and some of its allies to enshrine leftist ideology in the classroom, education can only benefit from increased exposure to the hard light of public scrutiny and political accountability. That does *not* mean strengthening the homogenizing, monopolizing, statist tendencies that both Arons and Black deplore. Rather, it demands greater tolerance for diversity within the educational system, even

at the price of some messiness. For only if we devise arrangements that are tolerable to the responsible dissidents can we shift our focus from their specific grievances, which are important in principle but marginal in practice, to the schooling received by the great majority of American children, which is and will remain public, but which is not yet nearly as good as it needs to be. That means turning our gaze occasionally toward the lofty ideals set forth by Stephen Arons, but keeping our feet firmly on the road paved by Ted Black. □

WHAT WAS LITERATURE?

Leslie Fiedler / Simon and Schuster / \$14.95

William H. Nolte

If Leslie Fiedler's *What Was Literature?* were only a little better than it is, it would be unreadable. But as it stands—outlandishly discursive, repetitious, strident, so utterly humorless as to be at times funny, egregiously egotistic, and maniacally messianic—it arrests attention, it warrants tribute. For one thing, it constantly surprises; the reader knows that just beyond the page before him there looms another extravagance in taste or expression, some platitude or truism to make the eyes water and the ears ring, some wild attempt to defend the indefensible or to utter the ineffable. So one reads on, wondering if it is possible, as Yeats might have put it, to know the dancer from the dance. This particular dance may not be a thing of beauty, but he errs who holds that Fiedler is a mere scrivener, a run-of-the-mill pedagogue, a witless purveyor of other men's more windy notions. What Fiedler borrows from Freud or D.H. Lawrence, his two favorite gurus, or even old class-conscious Karl Marx, he returns new-minted, with new thrills and aberrations, decked out in a motley all his own. Nor is Fiedler a mere fraud, hell-bent on getting his name bruited about in the little world he inhabits—although in all fairness it must be said that no man loves more the sound of his own name, or is more eager to pick a quarrel for the sake of hearing his own voice. The

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truth, unless I sadly err, is that he really believes what he writes.

In the opening chapter of his new *Book of Revelations*—a chapter he modestly entitles "Who Was Leslie Fiedler?"—our grave panjandrum protests (again) that he was indeed "quite in earnest" when he wrote his most famous essay, "Come Back to the Raft Ag'in, Huck Honey." Mindful that famous essays may not be all that famous, I hasten to inform those still sitting in darkness that Fiedler there revealed the homosexual relationship between Huck and Nigger Jim. And thereby either moved ahead or set back, I'm not sure which, American literary criticism by a few thousand years. True enough, Philip Rahv, who accepted the article in 1948 for *Partisan Review*, which Rahv edited at the time, considered the piece an innocent spoof of the humorless professorial criticism that was just beginning to clog the arteries of the learned journals and make reading about literature rather more a task than a pleasure. On learning that Fiedler wrote the essay with a straight face, that he was not being consciously perverse, Rahv confessed to being more than a little nonplussed. Served him right, I say, for underestimating the professorial mind, or rather for not comprehending the diabolic effect a long course of English graduate-study has on minds that are much more imaginative than they are sensible. But now Fiedler insists (again: *What Was Literature?* simply refurbishes earlier imaginings) that those who read the

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essay as a "straight" piece still somehow missed the whole point. Rather than run the risk of misrepresentation I shall let him explain himself:

What I actually contended, referring not just to *Huckleberry Finn* but other American classics like *The Leatherstocking Tales* and *Moby Dick*, was that, in a society characterized on the conscious level by fear and distrust of what I called then "homosexual love" ("male bonding" has since become the fashionable euphemism) and by mutual violence between white and nonwhite Americans, there has appeared over and over in books written by white American authors the same myth of an idyllic anti-marriage: a lifelong love, passionate though chaste, and consummated in the wilderness, on a whaling ship or a raft, anywhere but "home," between a white refugee from "civilization" and a dark-skinned "savage," both of them male.

Cf. D.H. Lawrence's *Studies in Classic American Literature*, from which much of this tosh was cribbed. Furthermore, note the great breadth of the generalizations—white versus nonwhite, myths of idyllic anti-marriages and escapes from "home," civilization versus savagery. If those generalizations are even less valid than most other generalizations, they nonetheless give pause, they make the reader think for a moment.

Having been encouraged (his word, God save the mark!) by the reception of that *Ur*-fantasy about poor maligned Huck and Jim, Fiedler proceeded, as he put it, to flesh out his "original insights" in the three tomes that followed, the most widely known of which is probably *Love and Death in the American Novel* (1960), surely one of the most wrong-headed examples of special pleading ever to break wind in the groves of Academe. But at least that book contained a thesis or theme, untenable though it was. In this latest effort, alas, there is mere clutter and mutter, a standing on tiptoe and a waving of arms, a boiling of old bones, the disconsolate cry of a fanatic trying to peddle his phantasms: *I write; therefore you're wrong!* The enemies of art must be put to rout. Load the cannon! Saddle Old Paint and ride! And who are the villains in black hats? Ah, they no longer wear black hats, having by now gained respectability. They are those infected with "elitist pride," those who prefer "high" literature to "low" literature, those who cling to outmoded Arnoldian notions and sniff disdainfully at the mush being gobbled by the democratic masses. Fiedler admits that he too was once infected by the elitist error, which led him to deride the works of Long-

fellow, James Russell Lowell, and Eugene Field, as well as Kipling and Robert Service, all of whom had been childhood favorites. Nothing wrong with that. Children have a perfect right to childish predilections. Besides, who says those writers are all bad, that everything they wrote is bad? When not jousting with windmills, Fiedler is disemboweling straw men. As a child I also read and adored those writers (and various others of greater or lesser renown)—and have no regrets, far from it, for having done so. Again like the pugnacious professor I memorized Field's "Little Boy Blue," which provided me with much tearful joy between sessions of leap-frog and walking on stilts, but, unlike Mr. Fiedler, the poem no longer moves me to tears. I can recall my lamb-white days, but I am unable to relive them.

In the chapter "From Ethics and Aesthetics to Ecstasies," Fiedler mars what has a semblance of sense by arguing too much for it. In effect, he proposes that the critic dispense with moral and aesthetic considerations and concentrate on the emotional or ecstatic element of the work of art. In his own words: "Once we have made *ekstasis* rather than instruction and delight our chief evaluative criterion, we will be well on the way to abandoning all formalist, elitist, methodological criticism, and will have started to invent an eclectic, amateur, neo-Romantic, populist one that will enable us to read what was once popular literature not as popular but as literature, even as it enables us to read what was once High Literature not as high but as literature." Unfortunately, the adjectives he uses in that sentence do less to describe than to pigeon-hole; in any case they are more than a little vague, not the sort of words that clarify much of anything. Here, as everywhere else, his problem is that he fails to say anything about distinguishing good literature from bad literature. He is, in fact, one of the least judicious critics, except insofar as he cherishes whatever is "popular," and hence in tune with his populist, egalitarian prejudices. For example, he proudly admits that he enjoys the TV soaps as well as such cop shows as *Baretta*, *Kojak*, and *Starsky and Hutch*.

Moreover, he confuses the role of the critic with the object of art he is proposing to criticize. He asks the critic to throw away his tool kit, or dissecting instruments, and concern himself (somehow or other) more with "myth, fable, archetype, fantasy, magic and wonder." He comes close to saying, in other words, that

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the critic should concern himself not with criticism but with re-creating the work of art before him. I think Fiedler is obviously correct when he says that the literature which is most nearly universal in its appeal is by its nature antinomian and will therefore reinforce none of the respectable pieties. Robinson Jeffers said much the same thing in "Poetry, Gongorism and a Thousand Years" when he wrote: "Poetry is not a civilizer, rather the reverse, for great poetry appeals to the most primitive instincts. It is not necessarily a moralizer; it does not necessarily improve one's character; it does not even teach good manners. It is a beautiful work of nature, like an eagle or a high sunrise."

But then Jeffers was talking about poetry, not criticism. Nor did he make the supreme mistake of confusing popularity with quality, as Fiedler constantly does—that is, after undergoing the transformation from elitist snob to populist advocate. He is of course as much a snob in one camp as in the other. But let us return to Jeffers, whose sane, clear vision offers such striking contrast to Fiedler's muddled thought and turgid prose. After chastising the "little groups," the faddists, who sought to "protect" poetry from the

masses by turning it into an esoteric form of speech, indecipherable to all but a select few, he reminds us that the other extreme, the one now upheld by Fiedler and those like him, is even worse:

On the other hand, let it be far from me to propose the average educated man as an arbiter of poetry or any other art. He has his own perversions of taste or complete nullity, duller than Gongorism. Usually he does not care for poetry—and no harm in that—but alas that he has a deep uneasy respect for it; he associates it vaguely with "ideals" and a better world, and may quote Longfellow on solemn occasions. This piety without instinct or judgment is a source of boredom, insincerity and false reputations; it is as bad as the delusions of the little groups; it is worse, because more constant.

In the second part, entitled "Opening Up the Canon," of *What is Literature?*, Fiedler illustrates his "new" critical philosophy by examining a few texts. And what are those texts? *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, *Gone With the Wind*, the illustrious works of Thomas Dixon, Jr., and Alex Haley's *Roots*. The first two of those masterpieces, he tells us, have haunted him for years; he still doesn't know quite what to make of them, just what symbolic meanings may be dredged

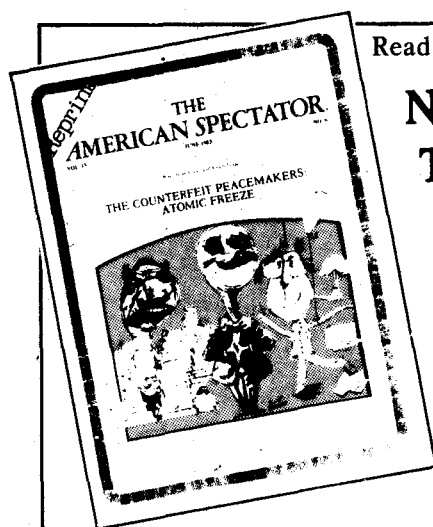
from between their covers. For reasons he does "not quite understand," Miss Mitchell's "book remains for me even now a test case, harder to come to terms with by far . . . than *Uncle Tom's Cabin* or *The Birth of a Nation* or *The Clansman* itself." But come to terms he must. Myths and atavistic shapes move to and fro with fearful symmetry. Symbols glow and then fade in the middle distance. Whole races and national groups—blacks, whites, Anglo-Saxons, Black Panthers, etc., etc.—mill about the yard wondering what the hell it's all about. Genders (ah, the Freudian motif!) get crossed and re-crossed and double-crossed. Uncle Tom is "female" and hence fair game to the rapist Simon Legree. "Niggers" haunt the white psyche—and no wonder: they come in all sorts of (symbolic) shapes. There are—and I quote and perspire at the same time—"good good niggers" and "bad bad niggers" and "good bad niggers" and . . . but enough. You surely see the drift.

No, not enough. Having subjected you, patient reader, to commentary on the Fiedlerian drivel, I must make at least partial amends. I offer lagniappe. You may recall I mentioned Thomas Dixon as one of the primary interests of our deep-diving and much-mud-upbringing critic. I confess that I have never read, and never will read, Dixon's novels, but I have for years known who he was and what sort of novels he wrote, the best known of which were *The Leopard's Spots* (1902) and *The Clansman* (1905), later turned into the famous movie *The*

Birth of a Nation. For some reason Fiedler fails to inform us that Dixon was a Baptist preacher as well as a literary artist, a biographical fact that somehow pleases me. I take the following review from a collection of Mencken's *Smart Set* criticism which I edited fifteen years ago, and which is now unhappily out of print. Mencken wrote the little notice back in 1909 when criticism was still in its primitive stage. For all I know, Mencken may have been unjust, but then so too are the gods unjust. Be that as it may, Mencken does, as Old Walt was wont to say, offer good health to you nevertheless:

And now let us jump from Paradise to Gehenna, which is to say, from the three excellent books we have been discussing to the Rev. Thomas Dixon's *Comrades*. The first chapters of this intolerably amateurish and stupid quasi-novel well-nigh staggered me, and it was only by tremendous effort that I got through them at all. After that, I must confess, the task became less onerous, and toward the end the very badness of the book began to exercise a nefarious fascination. I was exploring new worlds of banality, of vapidness, of melodrama, of tortured wit. I felt the thrill of the astronomer with his eye glued upon some new and inconceivable star—of the pathologist face to face with some novel and horrible coccus. So I now look back upon my two hours with *Comrades*, not with a shudder, but with a glow. It will lie embalmed in my memory as a composition unearthly and unique—as a novel without a single redeeming merit. It shows every weakness, fault, misdemeanor known to prose fiction, from incredible characterization to careless proofreading, and from preposterous dialogue to trashy illustrations.

No, I am not going to tell you the plot. Buy the book and read it yourself. The way to happiness lies through suffering. □



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"The Counterfeit Peacemakers: Atomic Freeze," by Rael Jean Isaac and Erich Isaac. The Issacs' in-depth feature documents the Soviet involvement in the nuclear

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1982 issue of *The American Spectator*. Since then the article has been the subject of a White House press conference, as well as numerous national newspaper articles and television shows. Order your copy of this 12-page report and make up your own mind about Soviet infiltration of the freeze movement. And while you are at it, send for additional copies for your friends—and enemies.

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A HISTORY OF POST-WAR SOVIET WRITING

Grigori Svirski / Ardis Books / \$25.00

Marin Strmecki

Grigori Svirski's book *A History of Post-War Soviet Writing* is a fascinating look into the workings of the Union of Soviet Writers. It is a study of one of the strangest paradoxes of Communism: a bureaucracy in charge of creating literature. The dead hand of the petty and the routine rules in the province of the spirit and the imagination.

Svirski, who for thirty years worked

Marin Strmecki is a researcher in the Office of Richard Nixon.

within the Union of Writers before emigrating to Canada, argues that the West misunderstands the nature of Soviet literature. He asserts that Western analysts and Soviet émigrés too often facilely le the works of postwar Russian literature into two groups: those sanctioned by the government, tiresome paeans to Soviet ideology; and those of the *samizdat*, vivid, courageous condemnations of Soviet reality.

The author's thesis is that this line is too blurred to be useful. Both the

official and the *samizdat* literature, he writes, compose one body of works, with the same authors addressing the same themes. Soviet writers artfully slip a great deal of social commentary past their editors and censors in veiled messages to vigilant readers. Whatever commentary the state excises is then rechanneled into *samizdat* works. The valid distinction, Svirski believes, is not between conservatives who write the official literature and liberals who author *samizdat* works, but between "people of conscience and mercenaries—those who had their price."

Literature has always been the ground on which the intelligentsia and the government—natural enemies throughout Russian history—squared off. Svirski casts the story of these two forces as an epic struggle between Good and Evil, with the former outmanned and outgunned by the latter.

Svirski's protagonists are the writers who use literature as the last refuge for expressing social and political opinions and who are, in fact, the spiritual descendants of Belinsky, Herzen, and Chernyshevsky. They are the Mandlestams, the Ehrenburgs, the Solzhenitsyns of the postwar Soviet Union—idealists in a country whose rulers value ideals only as props for their facade of legitimacy. More than a few of these writers crumble under the weight of the system's immorality.

Svirski's antagonists, by contrast, are the "hatchetmen" who "administer" literature. He describes them as mercenaries who on cue from the Central Committee will write whatever they are told to write and will denounce whomever they are told to denounce, not out of any true belief in the latest contortion of the Party line but in order to get ZIL limousines, Black Sea dachas, and Western travel visas—the perquisites of cooperation. With a surgeon's skill, they cynically search out and remove anything of merit that they can find.

The hatchetmen could simply hire pliable, if untalented, writers. But Soviet leaders make their job more difficult because they want to be praised by literary geniuses as well as by hacks. This allows the writer of conscience to get his foot in the door of the Union of Writers. Once inside, he obviously cannot launch a frontal assault on the system, but he can use guerrilla tactics, getting his message across to the "perspicacious reader," to use Chernyshevsky's words, by obscuring it in a secondary theme, concealing it in a subtext, or tucking

it away in a subordinate clause. Like the blind man who develops an acute sense of hearing, the Russian reader can detect these Aesopian messages which are too obscure for others to pick up.

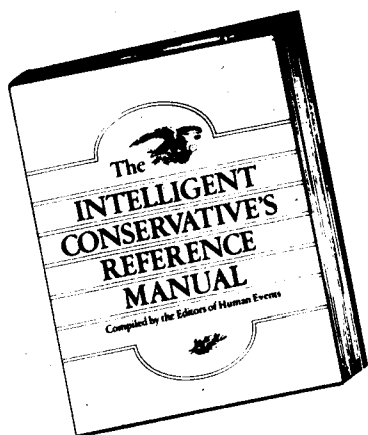
Svirski reveals these encrypted messages brilliantly. For instance, he reads a veiled criticism of Stalin into this seemingly innocuous passage of Viktor Nekrasov's *In the Trenches of*

Stalingrad (1946): "In a speech on 6 November Stalin made his prophetic promise: 'It will one day be our turn to celebrate!' On the 7th the allies landed in Algiers and Oran. On 13 November the Germans bombed Stalingrad for the last time, and flew away." A Western reader sees only chronology here. But a Russian reader sees causality—a cautious suggestion that it was not Stalin's

leadership but the opening of the African front that had stopped the Germans.

In another example, Svirski cites the changing reactions of Soviet audiences when they saw Mikhail Romm's *Everyday Fascism*, a documentary film about the horrors of Hitler and Nazism released in the mid-1960s. One scene features Hitler attending an art show in which all the

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paintings were portraits of himself. Soviet audiences greeted this episode with outbursts of laughter and applause because Khrushchev also once had found himself surrounded by his own portrait at an exhibition. When the film later vividly depicted Nazi atrocities, it became clear that Romm was using the analogy to imply that the Soviet leadership had committed similar sins. His audiences turned somber and left their theaters sullen.

The point about such works is that they must, above all, be subtle to be successful. Svirski describes with a victim's knowledge how the hatchetmen go about their trade, negotiating with prominent writers, giving justifications for the deletion of political commentary in artistic terms, and often simply revising a work without consulting the author. If a writer causes problems, the authorities blacklist him. If he persists, they throw him out of the Union of Writers, pull his works from library and store shelves, and pulp the books themselves. If others dare to pick up where he left off, the authorities

coldly return the manuscripts, noting in their rejections that there is a "lack of paper" to publish such works.

Ironically, the literary bureaucracy of the hatchetmen can often be the writer's best friend. Control of Soviet literature is not exercised by a single censor diligently reading everything, red pencil poised to delete. It is done by a bureaucracy of hundreds of publishing houses, with thousands of editors. If there is any confusion in censorship policy, men of conscience who have become editors or publishers will pedal whatever social and political commentary the traffic will bear.

The portrayal of Alexander Fadeyev, who ran the Union of Writers in the most repressive years of Stalin's rule, is a case in point of a man affected, albeit tardily, by the stirrings of conscience. Svirski recounts how Fadeyev jocularly clinked vodka glasses with a writer that he knew was slated for liquidation. Some years later, Fadeyev tried to deny complicity. When he failed, he shot himself. Svirski writes that

shortly before Fadeyev committed suicide he was quoted as saying, "I thought I was guarding a temple but it turned out to have been a latrine."

Svirski's history is worth reading, even though one must endure legions of typographical and editing errors in doing so. Also, a familiarity with the history of the Khrushchev thaw and of the Soviet dissident movements would be helpful, for the organization of the book often obscures the chronology. But the anecdotes and first-hand insights gleaned from thirty years of working with members of the Union of Writers enliven his literary criticism and give this sometimes tedious volume the personal flavor of a memoir.

The denouement of Svirski's book is ambivalent. On the one hand, he shows that the Politburo's satraps in the Union of Writers are in firm control—and news reports today indicate that their grip is tightening. The famous "thaw" in the fifties, while in part a natural post-Stalin relaxation,

was primarily the by-product of the confusing policies of the bumptious Nikita Khrushchev. Once the signal to freeze the thaw was given, it took more than a decade to root out the unrepentant writers, many of whom fought a valiant rearguard action, moving from one genre of literature to another. Svirski despairs that officially sanctioned writing today ventures only rarely beyond insipid tracts exalting Russian chauvinism or singing praises to ever-greater steel production.

On the other hand, he notes that Russia has always had the potential for explosive creativity, and its youth has been reared not on Stalinism but on *samizdat*. Svirski compares the literature of moral opposition to a stream that may run shallow at times but can never be stanchied. *A History of Post-War Soviet Writing*, in fact, is perhaps best read as a military history of the battle between the writers and the state in the Soviet Union. Still, he seems pessimistic. As he writes, "In Russia there is neither shortage of talent nor shortage of hangmen." □

S P E C T A T O R ' S J O U R N A L

THE LOVED ONE

by Francis X. Maier

There's an old Hollywood adage that a screenwriter hears on the very first day of his very first job: Less is more. Usually you hear it from a producer who, in every other respect, is illiterate, but it's still a true observation. Every writer likes to overwrite. And if you admire a character, you want to make everybody else admire him, too. What this results in, however, is flabby stories and overripe heroes. A good screen character has at least one important flaw upon which the story turns. That's what makes him real. And a good screen story says only as much as it has to, then it shuts up. Parsimony enhances dramatic impact. Less is more.

I've been away from screenwriting for four years now, but the catechism lessons you learn as a young writer stick, because every once in a while they're proved right. A case in point is Richard Attenborough's *Gandhi*. This three-hour epic begins with Gandhi's assassination and funeral,

and a minor character suggesting that generations to come will marvel at how a man of Gandhi's moral stature could have ever walked the earth. Those are tall words, partner. What comes after had better be good. Instead, they nail the lid shut on this film before it even gets started. Let me illustrate why.

My mother was Irish, and when I was a kid, I heard endless stories about those Christian saints who were eaten by lions, or beheaded, or torn in two, rather than renounce the faith. I loved those stories. But as I got older, I started looking around. *Nobody* in the real world was as good or as pure as the saints my mother had created. And so I decided that sainthood was the same sort of parental racket as Santa Claus until one day I picked up a copy of Augustine's *Confessions*. Here was a man who had changed the course of a world religion, whose impact on Western culture is felt to this day. Yet what struck me about him was his sinfulness. He writes about sin as an expert, with an irony that comes only from licking the bottom of the barrel.

And exactly because he makes his sin real for the reader, his encounter with God is also believable. That's why *Confessions* is one of Western literature's classics, whether you believe in the Christian God or not.

How does this relate to *Gandhi*? Just so: when you cut through the years-in-the-making and the giant budget and the box-office hype and the fine performance by Ben Kingsley in the title role, you still have a story about a saint, and not a very good one. Gandhi is hagiography at its most florid; it is one note played relentlessly for 180 minutes. This film, like Attenborough's other massive effort, *A Bridge Too Far*, is about events that have a larger meaning. Character inevitably suffers. Gandhi is portrayed as an elemental force for good, but we never really understand his interior chemistry. Sure, Gandhi gets thrown off a train in South Africa, Gandhi gets beaten up, Gandhi gets tossed in prison. These are facts, but while they touch the intellect, they have strangely little effect on the heart. Part of the reason for this is scope:

the film tries to do too much. Emotion is sacrificed for historic sweep. The canvas is crowded with bizarre appearances by Candice Bergen and Martin Sheen—two Hollywood stars obviously playing cameo roles. Other, more interesting characters are left incomplete, like Mirabelle, the young Englishwoman who gives up a comfortable life in the West to live as Gandhi's helper and daughter. She hangs in the background of numerous scenes, but says virtually nothing.

More important, the struggle between good and evil that goes on in every man's heart is absent in Gandhi's. He sees injustice; he goes out and fights it. That's about all there is to this movie. Not once do we see him grappling with his own self-doubt, fear, lust, or ambition. One of the few scenes that comes close to this happens early in the film, when his wife decides that cleaning latrines in Gandhi's new village commune is not for her. The scene poses a good opportunity for some sparks that might reveal the personal side of these two people and raise some sharp questions about

Francis X. Maier is editor-in-chief of the National Catholic Register.

Gandhi's motives and goals. Instead, the wife, who is portrayed as caste-conscious and shallow, sees the error of her ways after a stern lecture and allows herself to be absorbed into Gandhi's plans. From that point on, she's just part of the chorus. Nowhere does anyone persuasively argue that nonviolence might be immoral. Nowhere does anyone suggest that Gandhi's fasting for peace might have a whisper of egomania attached to it. In short, Gandhi's selflessness, his essential goodness, is presumed by the filmmakers. It is not earned. The character therefore is not finally believable.

So why are crowds flocking to see it? For one thing, people are hungry for saints. They're frightened, as they ought to be, of what the world is becoming. Gandhi was an extraordinary man who accomplished great things, and it's been quite a while since we've been allowed unadulterated hero worship in a film. Moreover, the film's appearance coincides with a wave of pacifist sentiment in the West unequalled since the 1930s. People want to believe that nonviolence can change the world, and Mr. Attenborough has provided them with proof that it can be done.

Or can it? Like many, I've often wondered how Gandhi would have fared had he taken on Stalin or Hitler. I'm sure he has an answer for that somewhere in his writings, but the truth is that the British, no matter how brutal they were, were finally constrained by their own moral premises. Other regimes do not share this attention to detail.

In the end, nonviolent resistance will work against an oppressor who still has a conscience. But this is the century of final solutions. □

CORRESPONDENCE

(continued from page 2)

only out of ignorance; and with proper education anyone with a glimmer of intelligence will convert. Among kids who grew up on Archie Bunker this idea is very easy to sell. Also, we are unfairly saddled with a distorted image of the Nixon youth of 1968: stiff, shallow, boring and one-dimensional. For an example of the groundwork for this image the movie *Animal House* will suffice.

The prominence of the *Dartmouth Review* and the individuals who produce it has served to help dispel these images. As their legend spreads, the young conservative of today becomes more appealing. We are colorful mavericks, standing firmly on our principles, turning to wicked humor and outrageous antics

to make our points. Obviously the genesis of this transformation involves a number of less than desirable factors, thus many of Mr. Lindberg's points are well taken. . . . We have in fact attained a measure of glamour by our individualism, a commodity of value in today's media-drunk society. . . . —Dorr H. Clark

Staff Writer
The Shadow

Santa Clara University
Santa Clara, California

More Martha!

As with almost all of her reviews, Martha Bayles's trenchant analysis of *Tootsie* (TAS, March 1983) did not fail alternately to charm, edify, and delight. It is not often—perhaps not at all—that one comes across a movie reviewer with a sense of observation matched only by irony: "When are men going to denounce all those truckstop waitresses who call them 'Sugarpie'?" When indeed.

How refreshing it is to find sober analysis of cultural trends that does not fall into the equally odious extremes of facile self-righteousness or fawning praise. —Joseph Arbadji

Northvale, New Jersey

PRESSWATCH

(continued from page 25)

Systematically, reporters overrated the battle prowess of the Vietcong and North Vietnamese and discounted the ability of the South Vietnamese army, Braestrup says. "Even as they described the flaws and problems of the allies, the newsmen in Saigon and Washington by and large failed to examine the North Vietnamese and Vietcong with the same critical eye." Who caused most of the civilian deaths? The allies, not the Vietcong; the massacre of 3,000 by the Vietcong at Hue was largely overlooked. The press dwelled on the siege of the Marine base at Khe Sanh as another Dien-bienphu, Braestrup writes, though that analogy was false. The heralded pacification program had been wiped out by the Tet offensive, the press determined; the truth was otherwise, Braestrup says.

Why such poor reporting? Braestrup, for one, dismisses the notion that ideology was the root of the

problem. "Why the distortion?" he writes. "I find simple 'ideological' explanations of media flaws gravely insufficient, particularly as applied to Tet coverage." Leshner, in *Media Unbound*, agrees. "Whatever the ideology of most reporters may be," Leshner says, "distortions result from the nature of journalism, not from the nature of journalists." Elegant disagrees. In covering the Vietnamese war, "correspondents were almost compelled to become partisans, and most became partisans for Hanoi, or, at least, against Saigon and Washington," he wrote. For his part, Norman Podhoretz, in *Why We Were in Vietnam*, says that "Tet provided the occasion for a growing disenchantment with the war [among reporters] to express itself." Regardless of who is correct on this, the fact that it is being debated in the first place is significant. It wasn't very long ago, remember, that the subjects under discussion were such things as whether the press had sufficiently scrutinized Henry Kissinger for possible war crimes. At long last, Vietnam mediatization is dissolving. □



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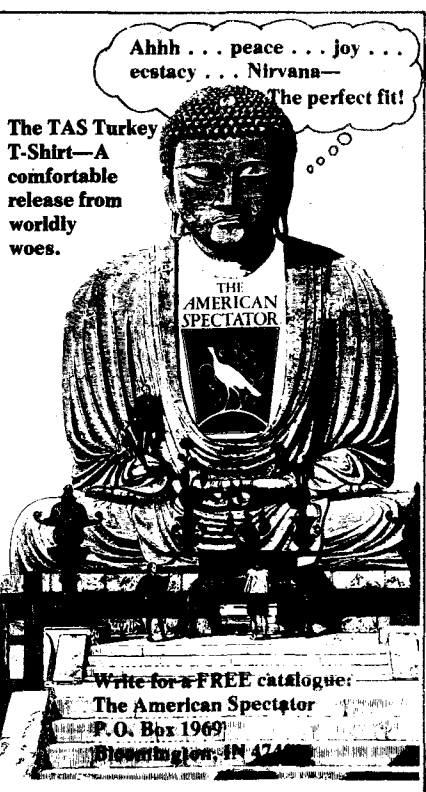
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Diplomatic Note
(Unclassified)

Volupt dithyramb from the desert louse:

Now as we are on the eve of the year 1983, of the Christian era, without a Christ to reprimand those who have forgotten God, those who are conceited, those who are transgressors of the divine law.

Therefore we have but to reproach one another for our sins and to reprimand ourselves for such a transgression.

We must understand that we are very far from the teachings of Christ and very close to the teachings of Satan.

The great and rich powers spend fortunes for manufacturing nuclear weapons, for developing intercontinental missiles and outer space programs and for propaganda and psychological warfare at a time when all the peoples of the earth are suffering the serious consequences of disease, starvation, malnutrition and the exorbitantly soaring prices.

These powers are led by Satan indeed, their book is not the holy book but the theory of Malthus. We are badly in need to reiterate the teachings of Christ where we shall find him saying hands off Palestine—the grace be upon him—and hands off all oppressed, colonized or persecuted peoples.

How much the world needs Christ once again today. How much does it need to abandon dancing halls, bars and immoral acts on every new year's eve. In order to go to the places of worship to pray to ask forgiveness and to reflect upon the divine law at least during this particular night.

I do know that the conceit of man and his straying from the right path today is stronger than my outcry.

On this occasion, I am offering the world these words only, but the holy book at its beginning says "At the Beginning the word was."

—Colonel Moammer Al Gadhafi
A Diplomatic note for President Ronald Reagan from the Permanent Mission of the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya (sic) to the United Nations.

[January 3, 1983]

The Los Angeles Times

A modern Liberal speaks his mind, goddammit:

GOOD NEIGHBOR POLICY

My heart was really tickled by Lee Margulies' article, "Mr. Rogers Is What He Is" (Calendar, Dec. 19). I just knew he had to be real; he couldn't be anything else. I am a 24-year-old kid, and I watch "Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood" when I have the chance. And I'm a better person for the rest of the day. He is a master at being human, a teacher of plain, simple, honest truth, and most of all he gives you the chance to be you. For us older kids he gives us a chance to keep in touch with who we really are. He's a person we should all be able to admire in today's world. We're so fortunate to have him as a neighbor.

Curtis A. Page
Sepulveda

[December 26, 1982]

Republican National Committee

The stupendous munificence of Paul Vivian, philanthropist and political activist, is again solemnized in a heartfelt letter from Mr. Mike Curb, finance chairman of the Republican National Committee:

This morning, when I looked over our 1983 Membership list and saw you'd sent our Committee a generous contribution of \$2.00, I couldn't help thinking, "where would we be without you?"

You have been such a special friend to our Party. . . .

I am convinced that with your continued support of our Party and our programs, we will be able to win a stunning victory in the 1984 campaign.

Once again, let me thank you, on behalf of the National Committee, President Reagan, and all our Republican officeholders and candidates, for your generosity.

[January 26, 1983]

The New York Times

The ancient James Reston rumbles for youth and against aged pols, a nostrum apparently inapplicable to senescent pundits:

The problem in the next few years is to concentrate on the young men who are coming rather than the old men who are going. Mr. Reagan has performed a valiant service to the country. He has challenged the assumptions of the Democrats and the welfare state, which was useful, but he has imposed his own ideology of his old age, which has not been very successful.

Do we really want to go on with these old men—the Reagans, the Tip O'Neills, the Cranstons—and the old conflicts between the parties, the regions, the races, management and labor—or do we want to look to younger men who see the possibilities of a different world in terms of cooperation rather than confrontation?

[February 20, 1983]

Ms.

Gloria Steinem, the Irving Kristol of feminism, asks another characteristically arcane question that only our Taki could answer promptly:

How long has it been since you spent a few days in the intimate company of women; dressing and undressing, talking, showering, resting—the kind of casual togetherness that seems more common to locker rooms for men?

For me, high school gym class came the closest. But that was the repressive fifties when even the most daring of us hid behind our towels, and others were so insecure about adolescent changes (or the lack of them) that they went through group showers with their underwear on, or wore gym suits under their clothes so they never undressed at all.

By the time we got to college, I suppose we must have been more grown-up and open. Nonetheless, sports for women, still "unfeminine," were anti-intellectual

besides. That gave us two good reasons to avoid most of the situations in which casual nudity among women was acceptable, and thus to go right on concealing the imperfect bodies on which we secretly thought our worth depended.

So I found myself recently, belatedly, having a basic, human, comforting experience that should happen to us all much earlier. Thanks to a few days at an old-fashioned spa in the company of 90 or so other women, all trying to get a little healthier, I discovered a simple, visceral consciousness-raising that ought to be combined with the more verbal kind. Like many basic experiences of which women are deprived, it is both strengthening (because it brings self-acceptance) and angering (why didn't I know this before?). . . . Gradually, there was less embarrassment about appendectomy scars, stretch marks, cesarean incisions, and the like.

[April 1982]

U.S. News & World Report

The illustrious U.S. district court of the Wolverine State vouchsafes glad tidings for Peeping Toms and naturalists willing to labor in the Republic's pens:

Prisons may not exclude women from employment in jobs involving contact with male inmates, rules a U.S. district court in Michigan. It chides the state prisons department for "stereotypical sexual characterization" in concluding that it is more odious for a woman than a man to view male inmates in the nude or performing toilet functions. The court also says that inmates have no constitutional right of privacy that prohibits their being viewed by correctional officers of the opposite sex.

[January 10, 1983]

The Baltimore Sunday Sun

From historic Baltimore, yet one more scientific manual from the disciples of Chicken Little:

Nuclear war. The end of the world.

We've experienced it with the lone survivor in "On the Beach"; we've contemplated it with Jonathan Schell in "The Fate of the Earth," and we've agonized over it with the Physicians for Social Responsibility.

Now we can worry about it with our dogs.

Yes, if and when the bombs fall, they won't fall just on humans; they'll also fall on dogs (and cats and giraffes and alligators and cockroaches and cockatoos).

Eager to sensitize the public to the terrors of nuclear war, Jerry Kurtz and Pat Gilliam, a local husband-wife team, have just written and published an illustrated booklet (only 20 pages) called "Nuclear War Manual for Dogs."

The booklet's aim is to alert dogs—and through them, their owners—not to let the world come to that. Man's best friend is urged to stop scratching his fleas, give up his total trust in human omniscience and get his master off his butt in some

action to prevent war. And the way to do that is to remind his master of how good life can be.

"Get your human sensitive to the loss of movies, sex, chocolate-chocolate-chip ice cream, retirement for parents and the privileges of adulthood for kids, TV, profits, etc. Make it clear that these losses would take place at the eruption of a nuclear war. . . .

"March—write your politician—organize—bark—mix it up—get in there!"

[December 23, 1982]

The International Herald Tribune

Another victim of American idealism, Senator Mark Andrews, pumps bilge for all the world to see:

People abroad "are much more impressed by the fact that Americans can produce enough food to feed ourselves" with a considerable amount left over "than by the fact that we've got a man on the moon or that we can blow the world up 10 times over with atomic weapons," he said.

[March 10, 1983]

Mother Jones

A comprehensive analysis of the mess we are in from Mr. Benjamin T. Hopkins, an avid *Mother Jones* reader and certainly a promising candidate for the very next opening on the *New York Times* editorial board:

I am a male WASP who attended and succeeded at Choate (preparatory) School, Yale College, Yale Law School and Princeton Graduate School. Slowly but surely, however, my lifelong habit of looking, listening, feeling and thinking as honestly as possible has led me to see that white, male-dominated, western European culture is the most destructive phenomenon in the known history of our planet.

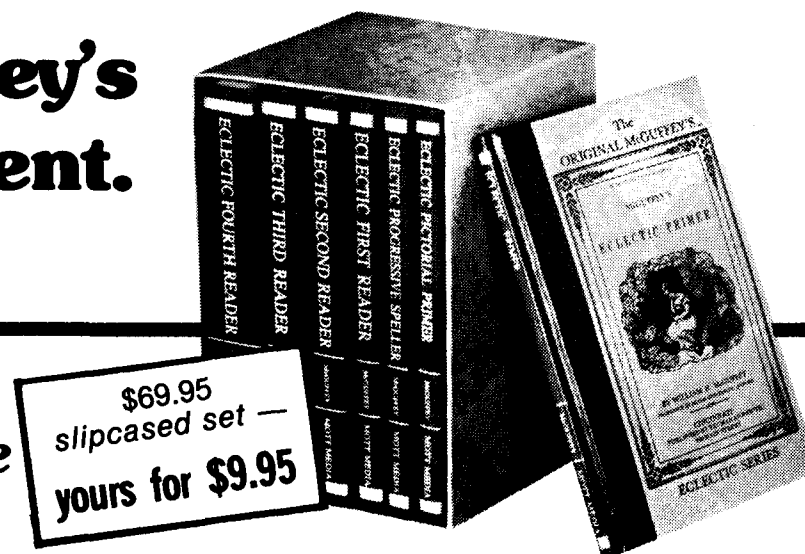
With all its creative brilliance, it is deeply hateful of life and committed to death; therefore, it is moving rapidly toward the destruction of itself and most other life forms on earth. And truly, it deserves to die. But those of us who love life must work for this result by some means other than nuclear, bacteriological or chemical holocaust, and for the creation of a more viable way.

We're going to have to bite the bullet of truth. We have to face our own individual, and collective, responsibility for what is happening—our greed, brutality, indifference, militarism, racism, sexism, blindness—then arise from the shock of recognition to create something better. At this time we "ordinary" middle-class Americans are beginning to feel the consequences of who we are; but we are not yet looking straight into the mirror. Meanwhile, everything we have put into motion continues to endanger us more each day.

—Benjamin T. Hopkins
Chestertown, Maryland
[December 1982]

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Eclectic Third Reader. Authors like Addison, Irving, Byron... Bible selections... excursions into history like the marvelous "Alexander the Great" — adults can read this book with pleasure. After your child of 8

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Mark Sullivan, in his 6-volume history, *Our Times*, ranks McGuffey up with Washington and Lincoln in influence. And a wonderful influence it was. Do your children deserve less?

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"Let's bring back McGuffey's Reader — **to College**" is how Carl Bode, University of Maryland, titled his article in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. Wrote Bode: "I guarantee that regular doses of McGuffey will brighten their eyes and bring roses to their cheeks... teach them to concentrate on the printed page... give them some of the memorable poetry and prose of our Anglo-American inheritance... make them better men and women, not to mention better-spoken men and women."

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